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APPROBATIONS

OF

CATECHISM: DOCTRINAL, MORAL, HISTORICAL,
AND LITURGICAL.

By the RIGHT REV. DOMINICK O'BRIEN, D.D.

We recommend to the faithful in our Diocese, "Catechism : Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", published with our permission.

✠ D. O'BRIEN, Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

By HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL CULLEN.

Having seen the approbation given to the "Catechism : Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", of the Rev. Patrick Power, by his venerable Ordinary, the Right Rev. Dr. O'Brien, and other prelates, I feel great pleasure in adding my approbation to theirs; and I hereby recommend the same Catechism to the faithful of this diocese, and especially to teachers in schools and to members of the Christian Doctrine Societies, as most useful and instructive.

✠ PAUL CARDINAL CULLEN, Archbishop of Dublin.

By HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. JOSEPH DIXON, D.D.

We feel great pleasure in adding our name to the above approbation, and in recommending the study of the "Catechism : Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", to the faithful in the Diocese of Armagh.

✠ JOSEPH DIXON, Archbishop of Armagh.

By HIS GRACE THE MOST REV. PATRICK LEAHY, D.D.

I have much pleasure in recommending to the clergy and laity of Cashel and Emly the excellent "Catechism : Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", published by the Rev. P. Power, with the sanction of the Right Rev. Dr. O'Brien.

✠ PATRICK LEAHY, D.D., Archbishop of Cashel.

APPROBATIONS.

By the RIGHT REV. MICHAEL O'HEA, D.D.

Skibbereen.

REV. DEAR SIR—The first volume of your “Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical”, I have read with much attention; and so satisfied am I with its orthodoxy and with the very lucid explanation it gives of the important truths of our holy religion, that I have already recommended it to the faithful of this diocese. We owe you much for such a valuable work, useful and instructive to the Clergy and Laity. You are entitled to no small benefit for the persevering labour you have brought to the execution of your task, and it must be gratifying to you to find that the encouragement given to you by the learned Ordinary of your own diocese has been sanctioned by the unqualified approbation of the distinguished Prelates whose “Imprimatur” has been so flattering given to your Catechism. Wishing the publication every success, I remain, Rev. dear Sir, your faithful servant in Christ,

The Rev. P. Power, C.C.

✠ M. O'HEA.

By the RIGHT REV. JOHN MACEVILLY, D.D.

Galway.

REV. DEAR SIR—You have conferred no small benefit on the sacred cause of religion by your “Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical”, sanctioned by your own respected Ordinary. I trust your zealous labours may meet with the success to which you are justly entitled. I shall feel much pleasure in recommending this work to the faithful of this diocese. Yours faithfully in Christ,

Rev. P. Power, C.C.

✠ JOHN MACEVILLY.

By the RIGHT REV. D. MORIARTY, D.D.

Tralee.

REV. DEAR SIR—I am pleased with your explanation of the Catechism. Such a work was much needed, and I am sure the Clergy will be grateful for this valuable addition you have made to their stock of Pastoral Theology.—Yours faithfully in Christ,

✠ DAVID MORIARTY, D.D., Bishop of Kerry.

Rev. P. Power,

By the RIGHT REV. EDWARD WALSH, D.D.

We hereby earnestly recommend to the faithful of the Diocese of Ossory, the “Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical”, published by the Rev. P. Power, with the permission of his superior, the Right Rev. D. O'Brien

✠ E. WALSH.

By the RIGHT REV. THOMAS FURLONG, D.D.

St. Peter's College, Wexford.

REV. DEAR SIR—I have much pleasure in conveying to you my approbation of your valuable work, entitled "Catechism : Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", and shall not fail to recommend it to the clergy and faithful of this diocese as a most useful repertory of catechetical instruction.

I remain, Rev. dear Sir, yours faithfully in Christ,
Rev. P. Power, C.C.

 T. FURLONG.

By the RIGHT REV. J. PIUS LEAHY, D.D.

23 Hill Street, Newry.

REV. DEAR SIR—Your work, which contains a full, lucid, and interesting explanation of the Catechism generally used in Ireland, will be of great service to the Catholic public at large, and especially to those among them who are engaged in the meritorious task of instructing the young and ignorant in the sublime truths of religion; and as it has received the necessary approbation of your venerated Bishop, I shall warmly recommend it wherever I may be able to exercise my influence.

I am, Rev. dear Sir, yours truly in Christ,
Rev. P. Power, C.C.

 J. P. LEAHY.

By the RIGHT REV. WILLIAM KEANE, D.D.

We hereby strongly recommend to the faithful of the Diocese of Ross, the Catechism published by Rev. P. Power and sanctioned by the Right Rev. Dr. O'Brien.

 WILLIAM KEANE, Bishop of Ross.

By the RIGHT REV. JOHN KILDUFF, D.D.

Longford.

REV. DEAR SIR—I have carefully looked over your work, "Catechism : Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", vol. I., and I think it must meet with general approbation and command a wide circulation.—Very faithfully yours in Christ,

 JOHN KILDUFF, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise.
The Rev. Patrick Power, Carrick-on-Suir.

APPROBATIONS.

By the RIGHT REV. JAMES BROWN, D.D.

Newport, Salop.

DEAR REV. SIR—I trust that your “Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical”, will meet with an extensive circulation. It appears to be well adapted for the use of upper schools, and of pupil and trained teachers, for whom some such manual was much wanted.

With best wishes, I am, Rev. Dear Sir, yours faithfully in Christ,

 J. BROWN, Bishop of Shrewsbury.

The Rev. Patrick Power, C.C.

By the RIGHT REV. L. GILLOOLY.

Sligo, Dec. 2nd, 1864.

REV. DEAR SIR—I have read your Catechism, now complete in three volumes, and it gives me great pleasure to unite with the many learned prelates who have already commended this most useful work, in congratulating you on the great service you have rendered by its publication to our clergy and laity. The zeal that prompted you to undertake, and still more the untiring industry with which, in the midst of your missionary duties, you pursued and completed it, deserve much praise indeed, and will, I trust, stimulate other good and gifted priests, similarly engaged in parochial labours, to persevere in the ecclesiastical studies commenced in college, and publish the result of their labours for the instruction and edification of the faithful. I hope your Catechism will be extensively read. I will not fail to recommend it to the priests, and through them to the Catholic laity of this diocese.

I remain dear, Rev. Dear Sir, yours faithfully in Christ,

 L. GILLOOLY.

Rev. P. Power, C.C.

By the RIGHT REV. FRANCIS KELLY.

Moville, Dec. 2nd, 1864.

REV. DEAR SIR—I shall feel much pleasure in recommending to the clergy and faithful of Derry your excellent “Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical”, published with the permission of your venerable Bishop.

I remain, Rev. Dear Sir, yours faithfully in Christ,

 FRANCIS KELLY.

Rev. P. Power, C.C.

APPROBATIONS.

V

By the RIGHT REV. JAMES WALSHE.

Carlow, Dec. 3rd, 1864.

DEAR REV. SIR—I cordially concur in the approval bestowed by so many eminent prelates upon the "Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical". I shall have great pleasure in recommending your highly useful work to the faithful of this diocese.

I am, dear Rev. Sir, yours faithfully in Christ,
Rev. P. Power, C.C. ————— ♫ JAMES WALSHE.

By the RIGHT REV. P. DORRIAN.

Belfast, Dec. 3rd, 1864.

REV. DEAR SIR—Though I have not read the whole of your Catechism, I have perused enough to convince me of the great labour and research this extensive work must have cost you. This Catechism, with wonderful precision and clearness, opens a vast field of information to the reader—in fact, leaves very few questions untouched, and in the explanation of each is satisfactory. I am glad to observe that you have devoted considerable attention to questions in science of modern interest, which will well repay the attention of those who care for such important subjects. Your volumes will do a great public service. Ever sincerely yours, ♫ P. DORRIAN.

By the RIGHT REV. GEORGE BUTLER.

Park House, Limerick, Dec. 7, 1864.

MY DEAR REV. SIR—I consider your Catechism a most valuable repertory of sound doctrinal and moral teaching, and I shall count it a duty, as occasion may offer, to recommend it strongly to the clergy and laity of this diocese. Believe me, my Dear Rev. Sir, most faithfully yours in Christ,
♫ GEORGE BUTLER, Bishop of Limerick.

Rev. P. Power, C.C. —————

By the late RIGHT REV. T. MURPHY, D.D.

Fermoy.

REV. DEAR SIR—I assure you I highly appreciate the first numbers of "Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical", and beg most cordially to congratulate you on the great services you are about to render to the interests of Catholic truth and enlightenment, by the execution of the task you have imposed on yourself. I shall feel it a pleasurable duty to recommend, to the fullest extent of my influence, the circulation of the work; and if you have the goodness to point out how my efforts may be most advantageously exercised, I shall be most happy to act on your suggestion. I remain, yours faithfully in Christ.

♫ T. MURPHY, Bishop of Cloyne and Ross.

Rev. Patrick Power, Carrick-on-Suir.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"We have carefully perused every line of Father Power's beautiful and instructive Catechism, and after forming as mature a judgment as possible upon its merits, we have only one conclusion to arrive at, viz., that the 'Catechism, Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical', is one of the finest books of its class that ever appeared in print. The pleasing style of the work is so attractive that one feels, in commencing it, that its contents will be of such a character as to prevent the reader from hurrying over its pages. The title of the book is quite too modestly put for such a comprehensive work. It is in many places scientific and philosophical, but these matters are always subordinate to the fine religious tone and pure theological teaching that characterize the work. Father Power has not far to seek for a proper basis or foundation on which to rear his goodly superstructure. Dr. Butler's Catechism or Abridgment of Christian Doctrine was at hand, and on this epitome of all that is essential, he has produced one of the most instructive works that can be found in the whole range of books pertaining to Christian knowledge. The work is written in a most pleasing, because simple style, and it is interspersed with various religious anecdotes of a most interesting character. It is a book which should be procured by every parent for his child, and no Catholic school should be without copies of it".—*Glasgow Free Press*.

"At no period in the history of our country has it been of more importance that every Catholic should be well informed on the minutest matters pertaining to his faith. Scarcely a day can pass without our being assailed from the press, the platform, or the pulpit, by a flood of argument or a torrent of denunciation, whose stream receives its supply solely from the apparently inexhaustible reservoir of Protestant misrepresentation. Against this danger we know no protection better than the little work now before us. Grounded upon the well-known Catechism of Butler, it follows each of its answers with explanations and illustrations, which, whether as meditations for those already instructed, or as guides to catechists in the instruction of the ignorant, appear to us invaluable".—*Catholic Institute Magazine*.

"Though limited in bulk, and written in an unpretending though lucid style, few more valuable theological works have

Issued of late from the Catholic press than the 'Catechism, Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical'. Its form is peculiar, taking as the text or groundwork of its theme the well-known General Catechism of Butler. Upon the questions and answers in this work, the reflections suggested are given in an enlarged form, and the oral explanations, which are frequently necessary in order to adapt them to the comprehension of the young, are furnished in the clearest and simplest characters for the use of the teacher. The work, however, is not intended for the instruction of the young, but is destined to benefit children of a larger growth. It not only deals with the general truths of religion, but it serves to arm the Catholic with weapons of defence against the inquiry of the sceptic, or the sneer of the scoffer. It answers the objections drawn from a perverted view of the sciences against the doctrines of the Church, and shows how they may be placed in their true light as the handmaidens, and not the foes of truth. For the benefits this little work is likely to confer on the Catholic world, the public owe a debt of gratitude to the ability and industry of the Rev. Mr. Power".—*Cork Examiner*.

"Written in a simple, pleasing, yet lucid style, and containing such a vast fund of information that we feel no hesitation in saying that it is well entitled to rank high in the order of religious literature. The Rev. P. Power has given ample testimony of his zeal as a minister of the Gospel by the unwearying assiduity with which he has devoted the little spare time allotted to a missionary priest, towards the promulgation of true religion in this admirable work, as well as in his most creditable translation of Orsini's Life of the Blessed Virgin, and Orsini's History of the Devotion to the Mother of God; and we heartily congratulate him upon the deserved encomiums those books have elicited from the Catholic journalists of the empire".—*Tipperary Free Press*.

"The object of the work is a most useful one—namely, that of supplying ample and detailed information on all the questions contained in the ordinary Catholic Catechism. Such a work, it must be confessed, was required; and the Rev. P. Power, who has collected his materials from all the best catechetical works in the French language, deserves much credit for the task which he has undertaken".—*Freeman's Journal*.

"The text or groundwork is the celebrated Catechism of Dr. Butler; but it goes beyond that universal manual, and argues on some points with a vigour of Christian science and

philosophy calculated to arrest the attention or edify the most advanced intellect. Take, for instance, the fifth chapter—‘The Mosaic Narrative confirmed by recent scientific discoveries’.—*Weekly Telegraph*.

“This is one of the most entertaining and instructive works for Catholics, but particularly for teachers, that we have ever read. Its contents are so simplified and explanatory, that persons of the humblest capacity can fully comprehend their meaning. We recommend it to parents and guardians, as it will be found invaluable for the instruction of children; indeed, persons of every age will find many useful and instructive lessons contained in its pages”.—*Waterford News*.

“We cordially recommend it for general use, as it not only conveys intelligence in a most pleasing and instructive manner to the young, but will be found to be of great service to the general reader”.—*London Weekly Register*.

“The introductory chapters are very interesting, and enter familiarly into the best modes of training and teaching *very ignorant persons*—that is, it helps us out of the greatest difficulty we have, for, if once people can be set on the right road, they will soon arrive at all the knowledge requisite”.—*Tablet*.

“We know of no modern work so well calculated to bring the truths of revelation, and moral and doctrinal subjects, in so clear a light before the reader; and we are happy to add, that the labours of the reverend and excellent writer are widely appreciated, esteemed, and extolled by those best calculated to judge of his exertions in the cause of the faith of which he is an indefatigable and excellent missionary”.—*Limerick Reporter*.

“Familiar illustrations and examples are made use of to bring doctrinal and moral points within the reach of even the most ordinary intellect. Nor is it for children alone this little work is valuable. Those advanced in years, and otherwise learned, will find many useful doctrinal and moral observations that will be found desirable to know. The book ought, also, to be in the hands of every Catholic parent who sets a proper value upon the training of children”.—*Tuam Herald*.

“A desideratum for our schools and Sunday classes. To teachers, monitors, and pupils, this work will prove of valuable assistance”.—*Nation*.

“Mr. Power has here commenced a work which we have long wished to see accomplished. His Catechism is a really theological and philosophical work. We recommend it to all

schoolmasters and teachers, in the expectation that it will be completed as satisfactorily as it is begun".—*Rambler*.

"It would be needless for us to go through the headings of the different chapters in this valuable work. We heartily and sincerely recommend every Catholic to become possessed of it—to parents it is especially valuable".—*Waterford Chronicle*.

"We have received this very useful publication. It is compiled from various standard French and English authors. The first chapter contains most useful hints for the proper teaching of the Catechism, taken from *Science Pratique du Catechiste*. At the end of each chapter are historical illustrations to fasten the point on the mind; this is followed by questions for examination, a practical recapitulation, and prayer. We wish the learned author all the success which his zeal and industry merit".—*Wexford People*.

"Independent of its truly rich yet simple religious eloquence, the Catechism abounds in historical anecdote which enriches and illustrates the text everywhere. We need say nothing further of this beautiful Catechism; it must and will make its way, and hold its way for ever, in every community in the Catholic world".—*Kilkenny Journal*.

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TO THE

Objections drawn from the Sciences against Religion.

BY THE REV. PATRICK POWER

(Translator of Orsini's "Life of the Blessed Virgin", and
"History of the Devotions to the Blessed Virgin.")

WITH EPISCOPAL APPROBATION.

"Take heed to thyself and to doctrine: be earnest in them. For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee".—L TIM. iv. 16.

"We have in children a precious deposit committed to our care and vigilance. Let us take all possible care of them, and be on our guard, lest the crafty enemy, who seeks only the ruin of souls, snatch them from us to make them his miserable prey".—ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM ON TIM, iv. 16.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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P R E F A C E TO THE FIRST EDITION.

The writer of the Doctrinal, Moral, and Historical Catechism, which is now presented to the public, has consulted in the composition of the work, the most eminent French Catechists—Guillois, Moitrier, Couturier, the Abbé Cossart, and M. Lantages.

The learned work of M. L'Abbé Guillois, from which the principal and most important questions of the Catechism have been taken, is one of very high repute. Within a few years, eight editions of this celebrated work have been exhausted; and that fifty thousand copies of it have been circulated is no exaggerated statement. The Catechism had no sooner been published, than it met with the approval of, and was warmly recommended by, the most distinguished prelates and ecclesiastics, as well as by the journalists and literary men of France. "For the unprecedented success of the *Explication du Catechisme*, by M. L'Abbé Guillois", says the *Ami de la Religion* of the 11th of November, 1851, "we can assign another reason, and that is, the profound respect and deep veneration which the author professes for the Holy See, its laws, its teachings, and its institutions. He believes, and he tells us, that when the common father of the faithful speaks to his children, his words should command respect in every part of the earth".

In the preface to the seventh edition, are inserted letters of approval and congratulation from the

highest dignitaries of the Church. The Archbishop of Chalcedon, in his letter to the author, mentions that he had already sent a great many copies of the work to the missionaries in America and the Oceanic Isles, deeming it the best work that could be placed in the hands of a missionary priest.

"The immense circulation of this Catechism", says the author, "is principally owing to the doctrines we hold and teach, and which are no other than *Roman doctrines*. The work is the fruit of fifteen years' diligent study and laborious research; and more than a thousand volumes, some of them very expensive and not easily procured, have been consulted during the preparation of it. We ourselves have received direct from Rome a great many documents, and decisions, on subjects of great importance".

The other catechisms consulted in the production of the "Doctrinal, Moral, and Historical Catechism", have long been considered works of great merit. That of Moitrier is solid and clear; every question being fully developed and lucidly treated. *The Science Pratique du Catechiste* of M. L'Abbé Cossart is remarkable for its extreme simplicity and familiar illustrations. Of the Catechism of Couturier little need be said, as it has been for many years in the hands of many Irish ecclesiastics. It is a complete treatise on doctrinal and moral subjects—its matter well digested and arranged. The easy and familiar style in which it is written, and the many practical reflections interspersed throughout the work, have added not a little to its popularity, and have obtained for it a very wide circulation.

In the catechetical work of M. De Lantages, every

question of Faith and Morals is explained with precision and method. The spirit of piety breathing through every line points it out as the fruit of continual study and unceasing prayer.

The Dogmatical, Moral, and Historical Catechism is divided into chapters, each chapter containing a lecture of ten and sometimes of twelve pages. At the end of each lesson are given two or three select and interesting extracts—illustrating the points of instruction that had been just imparted—taken from sacred and profane history, the writings of distinguished ecclesiastics, and from the biography of eminent persons. The Questions for Examination will be found of great utility, being intended to prove the amount of benefit derived by the children from the instruction; and the reference by numbers, in aiding the formation of the answer, will render more accurate, and more easily acquired, the knowledge of the different parts of the lecture. This is followed by a short practical recapitulation and an appropriate prayer.

The “General Catechism”, by Dr. Butler, forms the text of the work; as also the order of its lessons, questions, and answers is preserved throughout. A great many subjects which may appear foreign to a catechetical work are occasionally introduced, such as the questions of Magnetism, Phrenology, etc.; for on these, and a great many other like subjects, the Abbé M. L'Guillois has written. And should some persons deem subjects of that nature too deep and profound for the capacity of children, let them bear in mind that the Catechism is intended not only *pro rudibus Catechizandis*, for the ignorant who require to be catechised, but also *pro omnibus erudientibus*, for all persons who desire information and instruction, and principally as a Manual for Ecclesiastic-

tics, Religious, Members of the Christian Doctrine Societies, and for all those who are responsible for the proper religious training of the minds of the young. The writer, on that account, was unwilling to leave out those many useful and interesting, if not necessary, questions ; but whether or not they should be made the subject of a lecture to children, will be left to the discretion of the teachers. Any defects in the manner and style of the Catechism the reader will, it is hoped, kindly overlook. Missionary duties—continuous and severe—allow but very little time for the selection of nice words and the formation of fine sentences. The work is not intended to please the ear by the beauty of its style, but to improve the mind and touch the heart by the solidity and interest of its matter. It has been written principally for the youth of this country ; and if it will supply, in any way, an antidote against the poisonous publications industriously circulated among them by the emissaries of error, the object in view will be attained, and the writer will consider his labour not in vain, but amply rewarded.

CARRICK-ON-SUIR,

Feast of the Purification of B.V.M., Feb. 2, 1856.

PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION.

THE very extensive circulation which the “Catechism: Doctrinal, Moral, Historical, and Liturgical”, has met with, not only in Ireland, but also in England, America, and the British Colonies, and the many letters approving of it, received by the writer from distinguished ecclesiastics connected with the Catholic establishments of those countries, induced him, a few years ago, to prepare and publish an edition, in two volumes—having the *imprimatur* of the Archbishop of Westminster—that should correspond with the questions and answers of “A Catechism of Christian Doctrine, approved for the use of the faithful in all the dioceses of England and Wales”. Another edition, slightly abridged from the original—the philosophical questions and others not very important being omitted—was also published in 1865, in two volumes, that the work, owing to a reduction in price, may pass into the hands of the laity and pupil teachers of Ireland, and those of America, and so be extensively read—the “General Catechism” being the catechism principally used by the Irish in America.

Three editions of the original work being now nearly exhausted, the writer, at the request of many friends, who have taken a deep interest in the “Catechism”, has prepared and now issues a stereotyped and improved edition. Additional illustrations, taken from the writings of distinguished ecclesiastics, are inserted,

and asterisks (*) and other marks are to be found in the text in order to point out the illustrations at the end of the chapter corresponding with that part of the text, and a copious index is given at the end of third volume. The writer is, indeed, very much indebted to many illustrious Prelates and distinguished Ecclesiastics in Ireland, and also to those in England, for their approval of the "Catechism", and the very warm expressions in which that approval has been given. He has also to acknowledge his obligations to the Catholic press of both countries, for the generous manner in which the work had been received, and the flattering terms in which it had been recommended to the public.

The Catholic Institute Magazine thus speaks of the early numbers of the work:—"At no period in the history of our country has it been of more importance that every Catholic should be well informed on the minutest matters pertaining to his faith. Scarcely a day can pass without our being assailed from the press, the platform, or the pulpit, by a flood of argument or a torrent of denunciation, whose stream receives its supply solely from the apparently inexhaustible reservoir of Protestant misrepresentation. To this misrepresentation, in many instances undoubtedly wilful, but in others arising, we would fain hope, from unintentional misrepresentation, it is utterly impossible for us to close either our eyes or our ears. The result is, that there are few among us who do not feel that there is some point or another of Catholic doctrine regarding which he, at some period of his life, narrowly escaped from embracing erroneous views.

"Against this danger we know no protection better than the work now before us. Grounded upon the well-known Catechism of Butler, it follows each

of its answers with explanations and illustrations, which, whether as meditations for those already instructed, or as guides to catechists in the instruction of the ignorant, appear to us invaluable. These explanations are expressed in terms so simple and familiar, that the first part of the Catechism, now before us, might, with a certainty of beneficial results, be placed in the hands of children, without the intervention of an instructor, although it is clear that such was not the intention of the author".

A learned and distinguished professor in one of the principal Catholic educational establishments in England, writing to us, says:—"I consider the Catechism a beautiful and a useful work—I think the best in the English language".

A missionary priest writes:—"Your Catechism is the best work of the kind that has been issued from the Irish press for the last quarter of a century. I have a large collection of books—near a thousand volumes—and there is not a work in the entire I value more than the 'Catechism: Doctrinal and Moral'; nor do I know any work from which I have derived more ready and useful information".

An erudite scholar and late professor in our great national college for foreign missions, writes in his learned and instructive work on preaching and catechising:—"A work of the greatest practical utility, and one of which we cannot speak in too high a manner. For order of arrangement, for judicious brevity, combined with sufficient fulness of matter, and for general usefulness to the missionary priest, we know of no work on the Catechism more worthy of commendation than that of the Rev. Patrick Power. We have recommended it for some years,

and have found the ecclesiastical students under our care in college, as well as the young priests who have departed to the foreign missions, experience the greatest advantages from the use of it".

That this edition may prove acceptable to the Priests, Religious, and Pupil Teachers connected with the Catholic schools of Ireland, of America, and of the British Colonies, is the ardent wish of the writer, as for their use it has been prepared. A reprint of the work slightly altered is being published in America.

CAPPOQUIN,
New Year's Day, 1878.

CATECHISM,

ETC.

ON THE MANNER IN WHICH CHILDREN SHOULD BE CATECHISED.

The adoption of a system of instruction, which may vary from that pursued by those faithful guides who have gone before us, should be considered, and not without grounds, an unsafe system, and one that should be distrusted like every other novelty. Those illustrious men, our predecessors, have been given to us as models, and safer and better guides we cannot have. True, that to facilitate the instruction of children in the truths of religion, we now possess elementary works which were unknown in past times. Printed Catechisms, which contain a summary of everything necessary to be known, believed, and practised, are now in the hands of almost every child; but it does not thence follow, that persons charged with the instruction of the young should take less pains, and work less diligently, than those of by-gone times. To think so would be absurd, for each one's experience will tell him, that though the questions and answers of a Catechism may be easily committed to memory, still there will prevail a great ignorance of religion. But how can we love, and much less fulfil, our duties and obligations, without knowing them?

It is, then, a matter of paramount importance to seek out diligently and adopt zealously a method the most natural, simple, and best adapted to produce abundant and lasting results.

A proper method of giving instructions requires that we should have certain fixed principles to guide us. Those which have been judged best adapted to the end which we propose to ourselves, that is, catechising in the most useful and profitable manner, are the following :—

1. To possess a sufficient knowledge of dogmatical and moral theology, and to consider it a duty incumbent on us to study it every day, so as to render our knowledge practicable.

2. To have a will and sincere desire of imparting instruction ; but if this desire be sincere, we shall seek out every means of arriving at the end proposed ; if it be constant, nothing will turn us aside from it ; and the defects of those to whom we are to give instruction, so far from discouraging us, will excite us with more ardour to look out for further means of succeeding ; if it be sincere and constant, it will be necessarily efficacious.

3. To possess an accurate knowledge of whatever forms the subject of instruction ; to consider often the best way in which it should be placed before the children, so that they may both understand and take an interest in it.

4. To pay particular attention to the capacity of those who are to be instructed. To study their mode of thinking, of speaking, of reasoning ; their character, their turn of mind, their education ; the ideas they have formed of religious matters, whether they be accurate or false ; to become acquainted with their way of living, that the instruction to be given may be suited to their spiritual wants.

5. In interrogating children to make use of the simplest and most familiar words. To avoid hard *dictionary* words, which are not understood by children, and which are calculated only to confuse their minds, but at the same time to guard against certain homely

phrases, which, though good or indifferent in themselves, may be taken in a wrong sense. When children, in order to express some particular thing, make use of a term which means a thing quite different, we must endeavour to give them an accurate idea of what they intended to convey, before giving it the proper term, and to remind them that they were wrong in thinking that such a thing was meant by that word. This precaution must be taken early lest children should grow up with false ideas of the terms which they are accustomed to make use of.

6. With children grossly ignorant, who have scarcely any knowledge of the essential truths of religion, we must proceed gradually from those things with which they are already acquainted to those which we intend they should know; for if we at once enter into an explanation of what, perhaps, they never heard before, they will scarcely understand us, and much less will they be touched by the truths that we explain to them. The better way to proceed with children of dull minds is, to develop their own faint notions, and use them as means of arriving at a knowledge of the truths of which they are ignorant. In adopting this mode, we teach them to think and reflect, and so their judgment becomes gradually strengthened. For example we wish to teach dull and ignorant children how infinitely beautiful God is. Now, to apply the method that we have just mentioned, we should commence by asking them—what do you think is the prettiest thing in the world? We shall then, from the answer given, take occasion to lead them, step by step, to the Sovereign Beauty, and that by always adopting their own ideas and forms of expression. Again: if we wish to give them a knowledge of God, we should begin by speaking of those

created things which they see around them ; we should then ascend gradually, from one object to another, until we come to the grandest and most striking object, and thence we will lead them without difficulty to the knowledge of God. When we enter on the explanation of the Catechism, we will find this principle fully brought out and reduced to practice.

7. We should never pass from one truth to another, until the greater number of the children understand the subject which we have explained, and for that purpose it should be presented to their minds in a variety of forms. If the matter of which we are treating be of such a nature, as not to be easily understood or retained by children, we must again and again return to it, turn it in different points of view, until their minds have comprehended the subject.

8. We should very seldom propose questions to those children who are unable to give a satisfactory answer ; but when the question has been proposed, and no answer given, it would be well that we should delay for some time without giving an answer to the question ourselves, that the children, by the excitement of emulation, may be induced to think and reflect on the matter, for each will be desirous to have an answer before any of his companions, and the knowledge thus acquired will be better retained than that communicated at once by their instructors.

9. When a child does not give a sufficiently satisfactory answer to a question proposed, the child next in order is to be called on, and in case his answer be quite satisfactory and accurate, the teacher should manifest his approbation of it, and, by contrasting both answers, point out the deficiency of the first. This practice will induce children to be precise in their mode of answering, and will banish everything like routine and slovenly answering.

10. Let children see the connexion between one truth and another, and never enter on the explanation of an article of belief, which supposes the knowledge of another, without having first made them acquainted with that other point ; as, for example, you should not enter on the subject of the Incarnation, without having first spoken of original sin.

11. When any important subject is to be explained, the catechist himself should dilate on it, and that in the most imposing and striking manner, for too many questions and answers will tend to enfeeble the explanation, and render faint the idea which the children have of it, a thing quite contrary to the end proposed—striking and elevating the mind.

12. You should explain the nature of a thing before giving the meaning of its name ; for example, if we intend that a child should know the meaning of the answer to the question, "What is contrition?" we should not at once give a grammatical explanation of *sorrow* and *detestation*, and a *firm resolution*, but should by a familiar example make the child feel its value. "What would your feelings be", we should say to him, "if in a great passion you raised your hand against your father, and severely hurt him ? After committing so awful a deed, how would you feel?" The child would immediately answer, that he would be very sorry for doing such a thing, and that he would always grieve for it. "Well, my child, that sorrow, that grief which you would feel, is what is called *sorrow* and *detestation*. Would you after that again strike your father?" "No, sir, not for anything". "Well, then, that disposition is what is called a *firm resolution*". Afterwards we should make him understand, that by mortal sin we revolt against God, who is our Father, that we again nail Jesus Christ to the cross ; that done, it will not be difficult to make him understand that we all should

have a great sorrow for our sins, and that we should be firmly resolved not to commit sin any more. "If you had committed a grievous sin against God, who is so good, would you not grieve very much also? Would you not feel great sorrow?" "Yes". "Well, that sorrow is called *contrition*. Would you ever again commit such a grievous sin?" "No". "Well, that intention is called a *firm resolution*". Now let the question, "What is contrition?" be proposed, and the answer in the Catechism the child will at once understand, and will feel delighted at knowing so well that which appeared so difficult to him before. The great necessity of this plan of proceeding will appear, too, when we come to consider the chapter of the Sacraments. It is very difficult, not to say impossible, to make the generality of children understand the efficacy, and the divine institution of the sacraments, by a mere grammatical explanation of the words *sacrament*, *sensible sign*.

13. The catechist should assume an easy and natural tone of voice, neither too strong nor too weak, neither too high nor too low. To guard against monotony, his tones should vary according to the subject of which he treats ; for example, when speaking of God, his manner should be solemn and serious, and when hell is the subject of his lecture, his countenance should be expressive of alarm and fear.

14. At the commencement of Catechism, and also at the conclusion, something striking, and calculated to take hold of the children's minds, should be mentioned. An abstract of what had been said in the lecture immediately preceding should be given before the Catechism of the day begins. When Catechism is concluded, we should examine in what way we have gone through it, and if we find that there were defects in our method or style, we should take the necessary precautions against them for the future,

that we may become perfect in the difficult science of catechising well.

DISCIPLINE OF THE CATECHISM.

To insure regularity and good order among children, each child should have a certain appointed place when standing or sitting. Their relative positions should scarcely ever vary, for by holding the same place the absence of any child will be easily known. The boys are to be placed on one side of the church, and the girls on the opposite side. Giddy, restless children should be placed alongside those who are steady and reserved. Every child should be called by his Christian name, and no distinction should be ever made between the children of respectable parents and those of humble parentage. We should guard equally against too much indulgence and too much severity in our bearing towards them. Continually addressing children in a harsh and menacing tone, inflicting severe and humiliating chastisements for trivial faults, will render our instructions unprofitable, and will withdraw from us the confidence of those children. Too much indulgence will be no less injurious. If, whenever the children are noisy, or talkative, the catechist speaks in a careless manner, or gives a slight reprimand merely, the children will very soon acquire a habit of talking idly ; and thinking that they can amuse themselves with impunity, they will throw off all restraint, and so one will be making complaints of another, and the child complained of will in turn be teasing and annoying the child who complains ; and thus, whilst the catechist on one side is giving an explanation, the children on the other will be playing and amusing themselves. The great object of the catechist is, then, to make himself respected and loved by the children, to attract their esteem, and gain their affections ; and this

can be best acquired by a serious manner, a firm will, united with a sweet and mild disposition, neither too familiar nor too gay. "Allow little children to come to me", says Christ. Take Christ as your model. If you are sometimes compelled to speak the language of reproach, let it be without severity or bitterness. Children, no matter how dull or stupid, are yet very sensitive. True, there are many who can be constrained only through fear, but they are not the greater number; and it is better to gain their love than excite their fear. If you be affable and gentle towards children, you will gain an influence over them, and when you appear among them their hearts will be dilated, and they will listen to you with respectful attention. If any of the children act unbecomingly, let the correction be given in as few words as possible, and in a quiet and gentle, but impressive manner—as, for example: John, have you already forgotten what I have said?—I thought you were an obedient child; James, my child, God sees you, and are you not afraid to displease Him? Do not correct too often with the tongue; the eye will better answer the purpose; if a child be looking about, or laughing with those near him, fix the eye on him for a moment without saying a word, and he will at once see that he has been caught in the fault. Silently fixing the eye on him will make an impression. If you cannot discover which of the children is laughing, suddenly cease speaking, look towards that side where you hear the noise, and the little delinquent will suppose that he has been discovered and seen, but that his fault for that time has been pardoned. If the children become familiar with this mode of correction, and so disregard it, we must have recourse to some other form. A most effectual way of making children attentive to the subject of the lecture is, to ask the child who is inattentive what was the question that

had been just proposed. Not being able to answer, he will become confused, and this will make him more attentive during the remaining part of the catechetical explanation, particularly if he be ironically praised for his great attention. If, despite these admonitions and corrections, a child continues unruly and refractory, the catechist must have recourse to something that will make a strong impression on the minds of all the children, and will prevent a repetition of the fault. The child who cannot be gained by correction of a gentle kind, must be addressed in strong language at first; then his conduct must be represented as very bad, a contrast must be drawn between him and some other exemplary child; and after speaking for some time in severe terms of the bad example given by him to all around, let him be taken by the arm and placed alone outside the other children. But we should never expel any child altogether from Catechism, no matter what his faults may be. If a child should, through fear of punishment, or any other reason, remain away from Catechism, the catechist should not, in person, visit his house, and require his attendance for the future. That should be done through a third person, and one who may have influence over the child. When he returns to Catechism, he should be told how disobedience aggravated his original fault, the punishment that he deserved, but as he now, by his return, manifested his regret full pardon should be granted him.

THE MANNER IN WHICH A CATECHIST IS TO PROCEED,
WHEN PREPARING FOR THEIR FIRST COMMUNION,
STUPID AND IGNORANT CHILDREN, AND ALL THOSE
WHO ARE BADLY INSTRUCTED, OWING TO A PREVIOUS
NEGLECT OF THE CATECHISM.

The catechist, whether he be a pastor or a curate,

or a religious, has many difficulties to encounter in preparing the young for the reception of the sacraments, but his labours are redoubled when only those of the parish, who have scarcely ever entered a school, or attended Sunday Catechism, present themselves for instruction. Great pains must be taken with such persons. They require a peculiar treatment, quite different from that which is pursued towards children who are regular in their attendance at Catechism. The first care of a pastor, or catechist, with regard to that class, must be to touch and change their hearts, or at least to move them so as to render them attentive to what he is about to say.

He will thus proceed. Some day, one the most convenient, will be appointed for giving instruction in the church, and a certain hour will be fixed on, at which all are expected to attend. When they have assembled, the priest or catechist will present himself before them, his countenance assuming a more serious expression than usual, for their minds must be at once arrested and brought to consider they are met for something unusual and important. Having arranged them in the most convenient way, and after a few moments' silence, let him address them in words to the following effect :—“ Now, children, I have often spoken to you before on what you should do, and on what you should not do, but on those occasions it was at public Catechism and after Mass, and probably what I said, as it regarded others as well as you, did not meet with that attention it deserved. But to-day I address myself to you alone. I have a very important matter to communicate to you, a thing which perhaps you never so much as thought of before, and so important and serious is it, that I fear I will not be able to explain it to you as I could wish. It is, indeed, a very difficult, a very delicate commission that is intrusted to me; and to acquit myself

of it well I require God's assistance. So, let us go on our knees, and pray to God with our whole hearts for each other ; I, that God may give me grace to explain well what I intend to address you on ; and you, that He may give you grace to profit by it".

When all kneel down, let the catechist recite distinctly, and in an unctuous tone, the following prayer, or one to the same effect, after having first recommended to the children to repeat with him slowly the words of the prayer :—

" My God ! Thou beholdest prostrate before Thee these children, to whom Thou hast commissioned me to announce a subject of the greatest importance. I tremble, Lord, lest my sins should prevent me from explaining it to them in the way which it demands ; but deign, good Lord, to hear the prayer which we now offer Thee. They have a sincere desire to know it ; prepare, then, their hearts to hear it, and fill them with Thy grace, that they may profit by it". This prayer over, let all stand up, and let the catechist, with solemnity, address them in the following words :—

" I am now, dear children, going to speak to you on your first holy communion. In a very few days you are to appear in the presence of a great King—before the sovereign Lord of the whole world. Understand this well. If, when you are presented before Him, one of you should be guilty of mortal sin ; if your soul should be sullied with any filthy stains, oh ! what will become of that miserable, wretched creature ! See what will happen to any such child. He will be tied hands and feet, and so tied and bound, he will be cast into a dark, filthy prison—into a prison of fire, and that fire so frightful, so terrible, that not one of you can form any picture of it. If, on the other hand, you appear before this sovereign Lord with every mark of respect, if you come to Him well prepared,

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oh ! how He will receive you ! He will place you down at His own table, He will lay before you the most delightful food, and will give you what is far beyond the riches of all the world. Now, let me see which of you would like to be cast into that dark prison—that terrible fire. None of you, to be sure ; but you all would rather choose to sit down at His table, and to receive all the rich and magnificent gifts which He has promised to bestow on you.

“ You naturally are desirous, my dear children, to know who is this illustrious Prince. He is no other than our good God, the Master and Lord of heaven and earth. It is He who holds the thunderbolt in His hands, and prevents it from falling on our heads ; it is He who holds hanging in the sky the sun, the moon, the stars, who rules the winds and the sea, and makes them obey His will ; it is He who causes the earth to produce all sorts of trees, plants, fruits, and every kind of grain ; it is He who governs all things, and to whom we owe everything that we possess. This, then, is the great and illustrious Being who has commissioned me to present you to Him. But, to present you to that great King I would not dare, neither ought you wish it, if you happened to be sullied by those filthy stains which I have just spoken about. Do you know, though, what these stains are ? They are not spots which are seen on your clothes ; but these stains are—and now listen to me—your sins ; these sins which are inside hidden in your hearts ; these sins which you would not wish for the whole world that your parents or any of your friends should know that you committed, and which, it may be, you are prepared to conceal from your confessor when you go to confession.

“ But, it may be, that there are some of you who think that you are not guilty of all those sins. Ah ? let such take care ; perhaps, these are the very per-

sons who have committed sins without number. Let such recollect what our good Lord said to Judas, when that traitor asked, ‘Lord, is it I that should betray you?’ ‘Yes’, answered our Saviour, ‘it is you’. The Scripture tells us ‘that he who says he is without sin is a liar, and that the truth is not in him’. Think, then, children, think whether you are in the state of mortal sin. But do you fully know what it is to be in the state of mortal sin? Listen to me, and you will see what a frightful thing it is to be in that state. Our good God has a greater horror of a child who is in mortal sin, than you would have of a filthy putrid carcase; and as that is the case, how comes it that you can be so tranquil and so much at your ease, after committing it? How is it that that you can play, and laugh, and lie down in your beds quietly at night, without the least fear of God? If you died in your sins during the night, where do you think would you go? If when you retire at night to bed you find that there is a serpent or a snake concealed in the clothes, and that he is about to entwine himself round your body, would you rest easy? No, you would not, you would feel too much alarm. But recollect, that those who lie down to sleep in mortal sin have about them not a serpent or a snake, but a frightful devil. Yes, the devil is in their hearts; it is with the devil they lie down—it is with the devil they sleep. O good God! what a frightful state that is! But is there no way of escaping that fearful state? Yes, indeed, there is. There is one way of escaping; but what way is that? Confessing clearly and sincerely all your sins to the priest. Go then, children, at once, declare all your sins to a priest without fear and shame; and if you do so, these filthy stains of your soul will be wiped away; and how happy you will then feel! When your sins will be all forgiven, you will feel such joy and pleasure as you have never felt before. Oh!

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how tranquilly you will sleep for the future! for when you lie down, and when you close your eyes, your angel guardian will be watching you during the night, and will preserve you from all hurt and danger".

The Catechist must, over and over, speak in terms similar to the above, particularly if he has to deal with children exceedingly dull and grossly ignorant. Every exertion must be made to induce them to unload their consciences ; they must be made sensible of the miserable state into which sin casts them, for when softened by a short pathetic exhortation their hearts will be better disposed to receive the necessary instructions. There is every reason to think that if the catechist be filled with holy zeal for the salvation of souls, God will grant him the grace of touching and changing the hearts of children.

After having made a salutary impression on their minds, and disposed their hearts to receive and taste the milk of wisdom—for "wisdom will not enter into a malicious soul, nor dwell in a body subject to sin"—the best method of distributing this celestial food will be the next thing to consider. As the children who require instruction are supposed to be both stupid and ignorant, without scarcely an idea of any of the great truths of religion, it is a matter of primary importance to discover by what means they can best be brought to the knowledge, love, and practice of them.

The catechist should endeavour to speak to the senses of such children rather than to their understanding ; for in doing this, besides moving their hearts, he will render what he has to say more intelligible and more on a level with the capacity of the children. The tone of voice, the gestures, the whole exterior, will sometimes convey, as effectually as words, the meaning of what we wish to inculcate.

He should not confine himself to the explanation of things necessary to be known, but should make every exertion to move the heart, by making a practical application of the truths of religion, applying to the children what is said, by reflections and examples drawn from something connected with these truths.

The catechist should be prepared with a *summary* of the truths of religion—an abridgment of everything which it is necessary to believe and practise in order to be saved. The *summary* should contain the principal mysteries, the commandments, the four last ends, and the sacraments, all so linked and bound together as to form one whole; it will be, so to speak, the trunk from which will shoot the different branches of instruction, which are to be given in due order. The children should be instructed in this summary at first, so that whatever may be said to them at a later period, will be only a development of what they knew before. By this system of instruction the children through life will know whatever is necessary for the reception of the sacraments, how to elicit acts of faith, hope, charity, and contrition; in fine, they will have a competent knowledge of everything necessary for salvation, in case they should die before receiving more ample instruction. This mode of instruction is certainly of the greatest importance to all those who before had not a sufficient knowledge of religion.

There are some who think that it would be better to postpone an explanation of the *leading points* of the Christian doctrine, until all and every one of its articles had been previously propounded separately, and then to introduce the summary by way of recapitulation. But introducing the summary before an explanation of all the different articles of the Christian doctrine has this one great advantage, that the children will at once perceive the connexion

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that exists between all the truths of Christianity, which would not be the case if their minds be applied to the consideration of one sole truth, as the first would be forgotten when you begin to undertake an explanation of the second. At least eight days will be required to teach them this abridgment, but once they have acquired a knowledge of it, we need feel no difficulty in administering to them the necessary sacraments, if sickness, emigration, or any other cause should require it. Of course, if time and opportunity will permit, all the chapters of the Catechism should be afterwards explained in detail to the children. But in case the catechist is restricted as to time, there is no one who will not at once see, that it is far better that children should have an accurate knowledge of the principal points of the Christian doctrine, than to have an imperfect knowledge of the many questions which occur in the Catechism. In the one case they will understand the meaning of what they say; but in the second their answers will convey neither sense nor meaning.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

ON THE CATECHISM.

Q. Why is it that we have now met together in this church?

A. We have met together in church in order to be taught the Catechism.

1. Yes, dear children, you are now collected around me to be taught the Catechism. You meet here to be taught an admirable secret, the secret of living in peace with yourselves and with

each other ; the secret of pleasing God, and of being esteemed and respected by men ; for there is no person, no matter what may be his life, who will not respect virtue and piety in others ; the secret of becoming rich and laying up invaluable treasures ; the secret, in a word, of becoming happy in this world and of securing for yourselves after this life, eternal happiness in heaven. Should you not, then, pay the greatest attention to our instructions, and to the explanations into which we are about to enter ? And we shall be very careful to speak to you in a clear and simple way ; so that every word we say, and every word you yourselves say, may be well understood. But if it so happens, that any expression may fall from us, which you may not exactly know the meaning of, let no delicacy prevent you from asking what it means, but speak out candidly, and inquire its signification, and then we will endeavour to explain it in such a way as will be best adapted to your comprehension. The first question which will be proposed to you, and the answer to be given to it, includes a great deal. For if you know the Catechism well, and recollect what we are about to teach you, you will love and respect religion all through your lives, and will spare us the grief and pain of seeing you take part with those who are always turning into ridicule everything most dear and sacred in religion, and blaspheming that of which they are ignorant.

Q. What is the meaning of the word Catechism ?

A. Catechism is a familiar instruction, by way of question and answer, on the truths and the duties of religion.

2. Yes, that is the meaning of Catechism. In the

first place "Catechism is a familiar instruction". And when you say that you are going to the "Catechism", it means that you are going to receive instruction in a clear, easy, and familiar way,—in a way suited to your understanding. You are now young, and the better way of giving you instruction is that of question and answer; speaking to you as you speak to each other. We will propose to you the question, and then you will give the answer.

3. This was the form of instruction which was followed in the Temple of Jerusalem, when the child Jesus was found there. The Gospel tells us that He was "sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard Him were astonished at His wisdom and His answers" (*Luke*, ii.) And that is the very method, dear children, followed by us in teaching you the Catechism. The child Jesus is your model; endeavour, then, to imitate Him, by answering wisely and well to the questions proposed to you. But in order to answer well, you must think of what you are going to say—you must first attentively read the question and the answer, and not only attentively read or listen to them, but you must endeavour, besides getting them by heart, to understand the meaning of them.

Q. In attending at Catechism, what is it we are taught?

A. We are taught the truths and the duties of our religion.

4. We are taught to know God, and how good He is, and what it is we must do in order to serve Him. We are taught everything about the Sacraments which He has left us, and the commandments which He has given us. We are taught what God wishes we should know and do, that we may know, serve,

and love Him. When we attend Catechism, we learn the meaning of the words of the "Lord's Prayer" and of the "Hail Mary", and of the "Creed", and we receive an explanation of the *Commandments* and *Sacraments*. This is what is meant by the "truths and duties of religion". And can we learn anything so necessary or so beautiful as that heavenly science? It is a nice thing, surely, to know how to read well, and to know how to cast up accounts: all this is very useful and very necessary; but it is only useful for this world. But to know our religion—oh! that is knowledge a great deal more necessary than reading or writing; because it will lead us to God, and bring us to heaven.*

Q. Could we go to heaven without knowing the Catechism?

A. No; without knowing the Catechism we cannot enter heaven.

5. To go to heaven, we must know the way that leads to it; if we are ignorant of the way, we should be continually going astray. If you were ordered to go to London, or Dublin, or Waterford, the first thing to be done should be to ask the way; for if you did not know it, you never could arrive at any of these cities; so, too, you never could arrive at heaven unless you were pointed out the way which leads to it. But the Catechism it is that will make known to you that way; for the Catechism tells you what it is you must believe, and what it is you must practise, in order to be saved. So, all those who do not know their religion, who never attend Catechism, or seek for instruction, but continue ignorant during their lives, cannot know the way to heaven, and, not knowing it, can never arrive at it. No, they cannot; for they are always going astray, and taking the road

to hell. There is, dear children, no middle way ; if we are not on the road to heaven we are on the road to hell. We must walk either on one way or the other.

6. Oh ! how necessary is it then to come and learn the Catechism ! What will become of you, or what sort of lives will you lead hereafter, if you now neglect your Catechism ? You will spend your days in vice and ignorance. Not knowing God—not knowing how to love or serve Him—you will resemble the beasts of the field ; you will even be inferior to those beasts ; for every day you will be offending God, and instead of serving Him who created you, you will continue the servants of the devil ; and then, when you die, God will not receive you,—He will cast you off, and you will fall into the hands of the devil, who will for ever torment you in hell. Oh ! what a blessed and delightful thing it is, dear children, to know the Catechism well ! what a nice thing it is to be fully instructed in it ! When we hear a person speaking many languages, French, Latin, Italian, German, we admire him, and we wonder at his great knowledge, and we say, what a learned man he is ! But to know one's religion is a thousand times more beautiful and delightful.

Q. Where are our duties towards God and our neighbour to be learned ?

A. In the Catechism.

7. When we know our “Catechism”, we know our duties towards God, our duties towards our neighbour, our duties towards ourselves ; we know how to pray—how to hear Mass—how to perform every duty well whilst we live. Can there be any knowledge more delightful than that ? No, dear children, there cannot ; for the knowledge of God, and of the law of

God, is as far beyond the knowledge of everything else in this world, as heaven surpasses earth.

As, then, the Catechism is so necessary—so useful—we should do everything in our power to assist at and learn it; for know, that of all the benefits which we have received from God, that of calling us to a knowledge of His religion is the greatest. Oh ! what thanks then do we not owe Him, and particularly for having sent His divine Son to teach it to us !

Q Where are the chief things that God has taught to be found ?

A In the Catechism.

8. The Son of God spent three years of His life preaching the Gospel, and what does that mean ? It means that He Himself came to teach everything that we ought to believe—everything that we ought to do. It was in a country called Judea that He preached ; and those who listened to His instructions were the Jews, and in particular His Apostles. The Apostles did not a lose single one of His many instructions ; and what is more, they were committed to writing by some of them. The Apostles who committed Christ's instructions to writing were named St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, and on this account they are called the four Evangelists. But to be instructed in our religion, must we know all the instructions of our Lord in the four Gospels ? No ; but we must know, at least, the principal ones. And where are they to be found ? In the little book that you all know—that little book in your hands, called the Catechism. It is called the "Catechism", or an "Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine", because it includes the principal truths of the doctrine which our Lord has taught us. So that when we know the Catechism well, we know the principal truths of

our religion—we know everything that we ought to believe, and everything that we ought to practise, in order to be saved.†

Q. Is it sinful to neglect the Catechism?

A. Yes; and God will punish us for such neglect.

9. The Catechism, little as it appears to us, is yet the most beautiful book, except the Gospels, that we can possess: there is no other book which contains so much true and delightful information. How much, then, should we value it! how careful we should be to learn it, so that we may know every word of it! But should we be sufficiently instructed in our religion, if we knew all the words of the Catechism? No; we must understand it,—we must know what the words mean; and in order to understand the meaning of what the Catechism contains, we must attend to the explanation of it given by the priests in the church, and by masters and mistresses in the school. Now, attend regularly, dear children, at Catechism; remain not at home; never remain at play after you have heard the bell for Catechism. By remaining away from Catechism when you are young, you will grow up ignorant and wicked—you will have no knowledge of your religion, nor of the duties of your religion—you will lead a wicked life and, it is to be feared, you will die a bad death. This is the time to learn the Catechism; you have now opportunities of being instructed, which when you grow up you may not have.

10. Do not, then, allow this time to pass away without profiting by it; for the present time will never return, and perhaps in after life you will sorely regret that you neglected your Catechism, when you had sufficient time to learn it. And on the last day, what a terrible account you will have to render to God for neglecting to listen to the instructions given at Cate-

chism ! On that day the Lord will say to you : " I have spoken to you from your early days ; I have sent you pastors and masters, but, through indolence, sloth, or contempt, you have refused to listen to them. The time that should be spent at Catechism you have given to sinful plays and vain amusements ". Ah ! dear children, when you will appear before Him, after having neglected His doctrine, without virtue, without ever performing a good work, *He will then mock you and laugh at your destruction.* Yes ; our Lord will one day bitterly reproach you if now you neglect to assist at the Catechism. Ah ! let us never deserve to be reproached by Him.

Q. What are the dispositions with which we should attend Catechism ?

A. We must assist at it with attention and modesty, and we should have an earnest desire of being instructed.

¶1. First, we must listen with " attention ". What does that mean ? It means to listen attentively to what is said, and not to think on anything else. We must, when entering the church, leave outside all thoughts of play and amusement, and not allow our minds to be taken up with anything but the words of the Catechism, and the explanation of it which is there given. Whenever any person at home begins to tell a story, or read an amusing tale, do you not listen so as not to lose a single word ? Is not your mind fixed alone on what is said or read ? It is. But the instructions which are given you here are far more interesting—far more important ; for they are the words of God ; and will you then pay less attention to them than you do to a tale or story ? Oh ! dear children, never act so ; for it would be disrespectful to the word of God, and would be injurious

to God Himself. Be, then, very attentive to what is said whilst you are at Catechism, and so, in a short time, you will be able to answer the questions proposed to you. The better to fix your attention, recollect yourselves for a moment before Catechism. When you are entering the church, say to yourselves, "I am now going to hear the word of God: Jesus Christ is now about to speak to me by the mouth of His minister". For know, that it is as the ministers of Jesus Christ that we give you instruction; it is He who has charged us to teach you what He Himself taught whilst He was on earth.

12. Another means of fixing your attention is, the practice of the second disposition. And what is the second disposition? "Modesty", that is, a respectful and becoming posture. We must neither be looking about, nor talking, nor laughing at Catechism; we must stand still, our hands joined before our breasts; we must guard against scraping the floor with our feet; for talking, and laughing, and scraping the floor will distract others, and will prevent those who are some distance removed, from hearing what is said. You see, then, dear children, how very necessary it is to observe a modest, becoming demeanour during Catechism.

13. The third disposition is, "a great desire" to derive profit from the instructions given you. There is nothing so necessary for you as a true desire to learn. If you have that desire you will easily understand what is said to you; you will retain what you hear, and so you will be instructed in your Catechism in a very short time. If you are desirous to know your Catechism, you will never be absent from it, but will regularly attend the class, and hear what is said with attention and with a becoming demeanour. These, dear children, are the dispositions with which we should attend at Catechism.

Q. What should we do after Catechism?

A. We should return God thanks for the instructions we have received, and endeavour to put them into practice when we go home.

14. Do not forget during the day what had been said to you at Catechism ; think often of it ; speak to each other about it ; and when leaving the church and going home, do not imitate those bold impudent children who are always crying out and making noise ; but question each other on the lesson of the Catechism that was just taught you. If you act thus, dear children, what happiness it will be to us, whom God commissioned to teach you ! What a pleasing duty it will be to teach children who conduct themselves with propriety, and attend with regularity to the lessons taught them ! Come, then, regularly to Catechism. Never be seen playing abroad whilst instructions are given. *Feed my lambs*, God says ; and can there be to us a more delightful duty than that of obeying this order, by feeding that cherished portion of His flock which He has entrusted to us, and pointing out to them the way which leads to the kingdom of heaven ? May the Lord grant us the grace of conducting you to that happy place, and may He render you docile to our instructions, that so you may serve Him here and be happy with Him hereafter.

Q. Are fathers and mothers, and masters and mistresses, bound to send their children and servants to Catechism ?

A. Yes ; and by neglecting this duty, they render themselves very culpable in the sight of God.

15. Fathers and mothers, masters and mistresses.

should do everything in their power for the eternal salvation of their children and servants. If they neglect that duty which they owe them, they are guilty of sin ; for St. Paul says : “ If any one have not care of his own, and particularly of those of his house, he has renounced the faith, and is worse than an infidel ” (*I Tim.*, v. 8). They should therefore see that all those over whom they are placed by God attend regularly at Catechism. Their own interests, as well as the interests of society, require that they should faithfully acquit themselves of that essential duty. For there is no crime of which that man is not capable who is without religion, given up to his own bad desires, and hurried on by the torrent of his unruly passions. And those children who, owing to their neglect of attendance at Catechism, have learned only to curse and swear, will become the shame and reproach of their parents. Does not our experience point out to us many such examples ? How many crimes and how much guilt can we not trace to the neglect of parents with regard to the Christian education of their children ! Whenever the bell rings for Catechism, fathers and mothers, masters and mistresses, should at once send their children and servants for instruction, especially when they have reason to fear that they are ignorant of the truths of religion, or have not received their first communion. It is one of their strictest obligations, and one that cannot be dispensed with without incurring the guilt of sin.

16. You have listened attentively to what I have just said to you in this preliminary instruction on the necessity and on the manner of assisting at Catechism. Let us now see whether you have well understood, and whether you retain what has been explained to you. This is the course which I intend to pursue in every succeeding instruction. I will propose the

questions in a form different from that in which they have been proposed during the instruction, and if you give satisfactory answers to such questions, it will clearly prove that you know not only the words, but also the meaning that the words convey. But before I examine you in this Introductory Chapter, I will tell you one or two pretty stories in reference to the important subject of Catechism.†

HISTORICAL TRAITS.

THE NOBLEMAN AND THE CATECHISM.

* In a certain ecclesiastical house in France, a retreat was given every year to secular persons; and to assist them in performing the holy exercises of the retreat, various books of piety were given to them. Among the books handed to each person was invariably found a Catechism. A distinguished nobleman, who, with others, had arrived at the house to go through the holy exercises, seeing that a Catechism was presented to him by the superior, felt no little surprise. Smiling, he said, "What! a Catechism! Are you setting me down to my A B C? I was not more than ten years old when I had every word of my Catechism by heart". "Let us see", replied the superior, "whether or not you recollect it". He at once proposed some questions to him, at which the nobleman became embarrassed, confused, and unable to give a satisfactory answer. "Know, then, my dear colonel", said the superior, "that among persons in the world, not even excepting those who are very well learned in worldly sciences, there are very few who are sufficiently instructed in their religion; and as proof, you will find that many Catholics who write on religious subjects express themselves very inaccurately, and often advance propositions that must be condemned. They would not assert anything against faith if they knew their Catechism well. This little book, which you seem to undervalue, is an abridgment of theology. Every Christian should have one, and those who have learned it when young ought, when they grow up and are advanced in years, read it over from time to time, that they may never forget what it contains".

THE BISHOP OF MONTAUBAN, AND HIS DISCOURSES ON THE
CATECHISM

† M. Cheverus, when Bishop of Montauban, preached every Sunday at the parochial Mass, in the cathedral. His instructions were no other than an explanation of the Catechism. He commenced with the first chapter, and then took up the succeeding ones, according as they occurred in the Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine. At first he did not tell his hearers that it was his intention to explain to them the Catechism. So interesting were his discourses, that persons of every rank and class thronged to the cathedral to hear him. Protestants as well as Catholics, learned as well as ignorant, pressed around the pulpit. When he found that his discourses were admired, and that he had gained the attention of his auditory, he revealed to them his innocent secret. "If at first", said he, "I had told you, that I would on every Sunday explain to you the Catechism, you would have deemed it beneath you to assist at the explanation of it, thinking that it was only suited to children. But for the last six months that is what I have just done, and nothing more, and you have been deeply interested by the instructions given you. Know, then, that the Catechism is the book of the old as well as of the young; of the learned as well as of the ignorant. In it every person finds something to be learned, something to be admired, something to be pondered on; and to undervalue the Catechism proceeds from nothing else than an unfounded prejudice". The Bishop of Montauban continued his exposition of the Catechism, and his discourses were listened to on every Sunday by all persons with interest and pleasure.—*Life of Cardinal Cheverus, by M. Hamon.*

THE PREACHING OF ST. FRANCIS REGIS ON THE GREAT
TRUTHS OF RELIGION.

‡ The discourses of St. Francis Regis were remarkable for their simplicity of style. He selected some leading truth of Christianity, and explained it with clearness and precision, strongly insisting on its practical consequences, and concluding with an earnest, pathetic appeal to his hearers, which drew forth many sighs and tears. The most hardened hearts were softened by his words, and the most obdurate sinners returned from his discourses with sorrow and regret for their past crimes. A celebrated preacher, passing one day through Montpellier, where Francis Regis was then giving a mission, was desirous to hear a man of whom so many wonders were

recounted. He was amazed at finding so much enthusiasm and so many conversions caused by a simple explanation of the Catechism, whilst the most beautiful and finished discourses, composed according to all the nice rules of rhetoric, scarcely attracted an audience, and elicited only some faint praises. But the secret is, that the word of God, to produce extraordinary effects, needs not any of those aids derived from genius and great learning; it only requires earnestness and piety in him who announces it, and a will of being instructed and improved in those who listen to it.—*Life of St. Francis Regis.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Why do we assemble in church for Catechism?
 2. What do you mean by Catechism?
 3. What does the Gospel tell us about our Lord, when He was found in the Temple of Jerusalem?
 4. What are we taught at Catechism?
 5. To go to heaven, must we know the way that leads to it?
 6. If, when young, we neglect the Catechism, how will we grow up, and what will our lives be?
 7. Will the Catechism teach us many important things?
 8. What did our Lord teach during the three years of His public preaching?
 9. Does the Catechism teach much interesting information?
 10. If we neglect the Catechism now, will we regret it hereafter?
 11. How should we attend at Catechism?
 12. How should we comport ourselves at Catechism?
 13. Should we have a desire of profiting by the Catechism?
 14. What should be our conduct when leaving Church after Catechism?
 15. Should fathers and mothers, and masters and mistresses, send their children and servants to Catechism?
 16. In what way are you to be examined after Catechism?
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PRA TICE.

1. Learn your Catechism well, not only at school but also at home.

2. Attend at Catechism in the Church regularly on Sundays, and listen to it with attention, modesty, and respect.

3. Practise every day, and on every occasion, what you have been taught, and you will become happy children.

PRAYER.

My God! we give thee thanks for the instruction which we have now received; it is the first, and the one which will prepare us for the others that are to follow. We have been taught how necessary it is to know our Catechism, and with what attention and respect we ought to hear Thy divine word, for on that will depend our eternal happiness. If we pass our early days without being instructed in the knowledge of our religion, everything is lost to us. Pardon us, O Lord! for having up to this time neglected a duty so necessary, and for the future we promise to listen to the instructions to be given to us with the greatest attention and respect. And thou, O Immaculate Virgin! take us under thy protection, and obtain for us the grace of profiting by what is taught us. Amen.

CHAPTER I.

ON GOD THE CREATOR.

Q. Who made the world?

A. God.

1. Yes, dear children, it is God, and no other but God, who made the world and all that the world contains. He first made the heavens and the angels, and next He created the earth and all things which we see above us and around us. "God it is who made the sun that shines over our heads, and the moon and stars that sparkle in the blue skies. And He it is who has made the earth, and the great mountains that rise out of the earth, and He has made the

great seas, and the rivers that flow through the land into the seas. The green grass that we every day see, and the flowers growing in the green fields, and the trees growing on the hills and around the fields, were made by God. He created the birds flying in the air, and the fishes swimming in the waters, and all the beasts that walk the ground. Every grain of sand, every leaf, every flower, every insect, every beast on the earth, every fish in the water, every bird in the air, was made by God". There is nothing, dear children, which we see above and around us, that has not been made by God.

2. And it is this great God who made you, soul and body. And God has not only made you, but every moment He is supporting the being He gave you. Every time you move your hand or your foot, God is there to help you, putting strength into your feet at every step you take, and force into your arm every time you lift it. If God, for one moment, ceased to help you, in that moment you would become nothing. Oh! how thankful you should be to God, dear children, for having made you, and for always supporting and helping you.

Q. Who is God?

A. The Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth and of all things.

3. Yes, dear children, God has created everything. A creator is he who forms something out of nothing. The most skilful workmen cannot create anything; all that they can do is give a new shape or form to things already existing. Thus a mason cannot build a house without stones, without timber, or without many other things; but such is not the case with regard to "the Creator". To God

alone belongs that title—no other but He can be called “Creator”, and why? because He alone can draw out of nothing anything He pleases. There is no man, no matter how dull his understanding be, who will not at once see, that the world is not eternal, nor the effect of chance, neither could it create itself. For all these suppositions are repugnant to common sense; therefore the world must be created by God.

4. There are many convincing proofs that the world is not from eternity, but had a beginning. The origin of families, of kingdoms, of laws the most indispensable for the government of nations; the period at which the earth began to be peopled; the invention of sciences and of arts most essential to the support of life, and yet recently discovered; the elevation of mountains, which are daily growing less, so that if the world were from eternity, it should long since present a level surface; historical and traditional monuments; all this goes to prove that the world is not very old, and that its origin cannot be traced further back than four thousand years before Christ, as related by Moses. The world then had a beginning, and it will last only as long as God pleases. It is no less evident that the world did not create itself, for if the world existed already, what necessity for creating itself? and if it did not exist, how could it create itself? That which has no existence is absolutely incapable of producing anything at all. To say that the world has created itself, is to say that the world was and was not; an assertion absurd and unmeaning.

5. Neither is the world the effect of chance. Chance! Why chance is nothing; it is a word without sense or meaning. Chance could not form the meanest hovel; how, then, could it draw into existence the whole world? The smallest house supposes one who built it—and we must surely con-

sider him devoid of reason who would seriously say that the meanest dwelling on earth is the effect of chance. His folly would be greater, if he asserted that St. Peter's Church in Rome, the House of Lords and the House of Commons in London, the Bank of Ireland in Dublin, were not the work of human hands, but started up into existence of their own accord, with all their beautiful proportions ; that the materials of which they are composed—the stone, the timber, the iron, the glass—were some one day put into motion without any moving power, and had assumed the appearance which they now present. Yes, one who could hold such language would be considered as a fit subject for a lunatic asylum.

6. But if the meanest cottage supposes one who had constructed it, and if we cannot, without making ourselves a butt for ridicule, attribute its construction to chance ; what folly and nonsense must it be to attribute to chance the world so complete with wonders, and whose many constituent parts are united in such perfect and admirable order ? The world exists ; then there must be an architect of that world — sovereignly intelligent, sovereignly skilful, sovereignly powerful—who has given it that existence ; and that architect is no other than God. Yes, dear children, no other but God could create all those wonderful things in heaven and in earth. Everywhere we see the stamp of infinite wisdom, and that wisdom can be no other than the wisdom of God.

7. God is “the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth and of all things”, because all things depend on Him, and because He governs all things by His providence, and nothing can happen without His order and permission. The word Lord means master. To say that God is the “ Sovereign Lord of all things”

signifies that He has infinite power over everything that exists. Yes, God disposes of everything according to His pleasure, because He has made everything, and because all things that are created depend on Him who created them, and so, He can do with them what He pleases, and no one has a right to complain of His arrangements.

8. As God has created everything, so He governs everything by His providence. By the providence of God is meant the care which He takes of all things created. God could not without the sacrifice of the most delightful of His perfections—those of which He appears most jealous, His wisdom and goodness—surrender up to blind chance all the creatures whom He has formed. Had He done so, He would act with less wisdom and goodness than man, who pays attention to the preservation of his works. And to entertain such an idea as that of God, would be folly no less than blasphemy. In every age man was impressed with the conviction, that the world was directed by God ; that the goods and evils of life, that rewards and punishments, were dealt out by Him, for His greater glory and our greater good.

9. This Divine Providence is universal. It extends to all creatures, because all things have their being from God, and on God everything depends for its preservation. Everything that happens in the world, with the exception of sin, God wills and ordains. It is God that makes the sun to rise every day to give us light and heat—it is God who renders the land fruitful, that we may receive from it the means of support—it is God who sends us good and bad seasons, heat and cold, abundance and want—it is God who lets fall the rain and the dew, who makes the thunder roar and the tempest howl. From God proceed joy and sadness, health and sickness, riches

and poverty. God, in fine, it is who rules, wills, and ordains everything.*

10. But there is one thing, as we have said before, that God neither wills nor ordains, and that one thing is sin ; He prohibits and condemns that. He *permits it*, however, though He allows not man to commit it. Having created man free, He is unwilling to deprive him of that freedom—that is, the power, the faculty, of doing good or evil—but He is prepared to reward or punish him according to the good or bad use he has made of his free will.

Q. If there be a Divine Providence, how comes it that the good so often suffer in this world, and the wicked prosper ?

A. Because the present life is only a place of trial ; and there is another life where the wicked will be punished and the good rewarded.

11. In the general arrangement of the world, we must, in considering man and everything relating to him, not confine ourselves to the present life, but include the life to come, when the goodness of God, and His Providence, will be clearly manifested and justified. In place, then, of arraigning Providence, because often in this life vice is rewarded and virtue unrecompensed, we ought to consider that the good and bad have equally a Judge, who will sooner or later punish or reward every one according to his works. Add to this, that there is scarcely any person, however wicked and bad, who does not perform some good act or other during life, and such good acts are recompensed by his present prosperity ; and that there is scarcely one, however good and perfect, who is not subject to some faults and imperfections, but those faults and imperfections are expiated by the passing evils of life. Many other reasons could be assigned why the just are afflicted here below, and the wicked prosper.

12. "God", says M. de la Chattadio, "permits the good to meet with the crosses and afflictions of life, in order that their hearts should be detached from this deceitful world, and that they may be made like to Jesus Christ—that they may practise the virtues of patience, humility, confidence, resignation—that they may unite themselves with their suffering Jesus, and render themselves models of every virtue—that in, short, they may be tried, and so enriched with every merit, that by passing, like their divine Master, from the cross to glory, they may have a right to be crowned for an eternity. On the other hand, God permits that the wicked should enjoy prosperity, and that for many reasons. At one time He wishes to gain over those who are at enmity with Him, and make them some return for the occasional good works performed by them ; at another time He wishes to set us the example of doing good even to our enemies ; again His design is to punish the wicked by giving them up to the desires of their hearts, and not chastening them as He does His children. A grand lesson, from which we should learn, that God's love for us is not to be measured by the good things which He sends us, and that the passing comforts of life should not be so much valued by us, as God sometimes gives them to His enemies as so many undoubted chastisements".†

Q. How can you reconcile the existence of Divine Providence with the inequality of conditions ?

A. The inequality of conditions is a necessary consequence of the state of human society, and so proves nothing against the existence of a Divine Providence.

13. Man, dear children, has been created a social being, that is, has been destined to live, not apart, but in company with his fellow-man, both mutually

aiding and assisting each other, concurring to the happiness of each by a reciprocity of good services and a constant interchange of good offices. But this could not be, nor even could it be conceived, without inequality in the states of life. A man gifted with high intelligence, whilst he explores the secrets of nature and the depths of science, requires a labourer who may cultivate the land which is to nourish him, and an artisan who may furnish the objects necessary for supplying his wants. If the labourer and artisan said : "We, too, wish to have a character of learning", and under this impression flung away, one his spade, and the other all the instruments of his art, what would become of society? Why, it would perish and fall to pieces. If all persons in the world were masters and employers, who could be got to work, to till the land, to perform all the various other offices of society? If all persons were equally circumstanced in this world, there would be nothing but misery and wretchedness, —society could not be held together, but would go to ruin. As the social state is the natural state of man, there must be rich and poor, masters and servants, learned and ignorant. But why is this man rich and that man poor? Why! Because it is the will of God. He is absolute master of His gifts, and no matter how few those gifts are that have been bestowed on us, we should never cease thanking and blessing Divine Providence for them; for we had no right to them, nor were they due to us.

14. Since God governs everything, what are we then to conclude? As a God infinitely good continually watches over us, let us continually confide in Him, and be ever persuaded that He shall never withhold from us whatever is necessary for our present and future welfare. If afflictions come upon us,

let us receive them with entire submission to His holy will, for it is from God they proceed, and He has His own wise ends in sending them. If we meet with contempt, and become a butt for calumny and ridicule, let us recollect that God tries us because He loves us, and after the example of Jesus Christ, let us say—"Heavenly Father, Thy will be done, and not mine". Under all circumstances, and no matter what the provocation may be that we receive, let us guard against murmuring and impatience, and let us not imitate those irreligious persons, who, when they meet with any afflictions, fly in the face of God, and impiously ask—"What have I done to God that He should afflict me so?" as if all the afflictions and miseries of this life could bear the least comparison to what one mortal sin deserves; and who is there, who can from his conscience say, that he never committed one mortal sin? What ! you murmur against Divine Providence, because your health is bad, because you have lost your property, and you demand what you have done to God, that He should afflict you in this way ! Ah ! recollect yourself ; count up, if you can, all the faults that you have been guilty of, and think of the punishment which long since you should have suffered, if God, instead of listening to the voice of mercy, had heard the voice of His justice. Think on this, and so far from complaining, you will be resigned, submissive, and grateful.‡

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE PATRIARCH JOSEPH, AND THE FAMINE.

* Jacob had twelve sons. One of them, called Joseph, who was a good boy, told his father of some very wicked thing

which his brothers had done. 'They were very angry because Joseph had done his duty in telling of them. They said they would take revenge for it. One day, when they were minding the sheep in the country, Joseph came to see them. When they saw Joseph coming they said one to another, "Let us kill him". While they were thinking of killing him, some merchants happened to pass by. So they thought they would sell their brother Joseph to the merchants. When Joseph found that his brothers were going to sell him, he cried and sobbed, and asked them to have pity on him, and not to sell him. But they had no pity for their poor brother. So they sold him to the merchants for twenty pieces of silver. The merchants then went on their journey, and carried poor Joseph far away into the land of Egypt. What a misfortune, a little child would say, for Joseph to be sold, to lose his father and brothers, and never to see them again—to be carried away into a strange country where he knew nobody. But it is the providence of God that the greatest blessings come in the shape of the greatest misfortunes. Some years had passed, and a frightful famine was come on the land where Joseph's father and brothers were living. There was no bread to eat. They heard that corn was sold in Egypt, so they took sacks, and went there to buy it. When they came into Egypt, they went to the house of the ruler, because all the corn belonged to him. There they found that the ruler was their own brother Joseph, whom they had sold! Joseph cried through joy to see his brothers again. He gave them plenty of corn. He told them not to be afraid for having sold him, because it had been God's will that he should be sold to go into Egypt to provide corn for them in the famine. So Joseph's misfortune saved himself and his father and brothers from dying of hunger in the famine. Thus it is the Providence of God that *the greatest blessings should come in the shape of the greatest misfortunes*. The Providence of God makes even our losses become a gain to us.

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES AND THE LOST BOAT.

↑ St. Francis of Sales was in a town called Ancona. He wanted to sail across the sea to Venice. Seeing a boat, he went to the captain and paid the price of a place in the boat. Then he went on board and sat down, waiting for the boat to set off. While he was sitting there, a person came and told him that he could not have a place, because all the boat had been hired by some one else. Francis begged that he might be allowed to stay, because he would take up very little room, and he was in a great hurry to go. However, he was not lis-

tened to. So he was obliged to take his things and go out of the boat. He thought it a great misfortune that he had lost such a good opportunity of going on his journey. He stood for a while on the land, watching the boat set off. A fine wind filled the sails, and carried the boat quickly over the water. The sun was bright, and the weather calm. But when the boat was far out at sea the weather began to change. Dark clouds covered the sky, the thunders roared, and the lightnings flashed around the boat. It was tossed about by fierce winds. For a while the sailors struggled against the storm. But the waves of the sea dashed over them. At last St. Francis saw the boat sink down into the sea. Every body in the boat was drowned! St. Francis then saw that the loss of his place in the boat was a great blessing. If he had been in it he would have been drowned. He learned ever afterwards to believe that the losses and sufferings which Providence sent him were for his greater good.

THE PREACHER AND THE ARTISAN.

¶ Father Beauregard, after preaching, in one of the churches in Paris, his celebrated sermon on Providence, was met on his return home by a person altogether unknown to him, who demanded a few moments' conversation with him, and thus spoke to him:—"Sir, I have just heard your sermon, and a beautiful discourse I admit it was; it could not be delivered in better style. In it you dwelt long on the benefits of Providence, but in that kind Providence I have no belief; at least for me there is no Providence. Start not! listen, and then say if I am without grounds for my assertion. I am a carpenter by trade; I have a wife and three children; we have maintained the character of a respectable, industrious, and honest family; but now a dreadful calamity has fallen on me, through the failure of one who was indebted to me for a large sum. I have entered into engagements, which must be met on the 30th of this month, but now there is not the slightest hope that I can fulfil them; and, indeed, it will be the first time that my bill will be protested. I cannot support the idea of such a calamity; to ward it off I have made every exertion. I have applied to some members of my family for aid, but they are no better off than myself. I see no means of extricating myself from the difficulty in which I am placed but one way, and that is to deprive myself of existence". The good Father Beauregard, greatly affected at this poor man's recital, at once stood up, opened his desk, drew from it a hundred louis-d'ors, and moving towards him, presented him the sum, saying:—"My friend, here are &

hundred louis-d'ors ; they are not mine—I have no wealth—but a few days ago, after the conclusion of a sermon which I preached on Alms Deeds, a distinguished lady (he named her) forwarded me that sum, to be given for any charitable purpose I pleased. The amount would have solaced many a poor family among whom I intended to distribute it ; but, my child, your presenting yourself to me under such painful circumstances, at this very favourable time, is another proof to me of an overruling Providence. Take, then, these hundred louis d'ors ; go and meet your engagements, and believe in a Providence".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. By whom was heaven and earth made ?
2. Who has created us, both soul and body ?
3. Can any one but God be called a Creator ?
4. What proofs can you give that the world is not from eternity ?
5. Could not the world be the effect of chance ?
6. Is it great folly to attribute the creation of the world to chance ?
7. Has God power over everything that exists ?
8. What do you mean by the Providence of God ?
9. Is Divine Providence universal ?
10. Is there any one thing that God neither wills nor ordains ?
11. Why is it that the wicked are rewarded in this life, and the good punished ?
12. What says M. de la Chattadio on the Providence of God ?
13. What would happen if all persons were on an equality ?
14. Under afflictions and crosses, what should be our sentiments ?

PRACTICE.

1. Never forget that God has created you, to know, love, and serve Him here, that you may possess Him for ever in heaven.
2. Let everything be directed towards this end of your creation.
3. In whatever state of life God has placed you, whether in a high or humble state, be always content with it, and never murmur if He sends you crosses or afflictions.

PRAYER.

Creator and Sovereign Master of Heaven and Earth ! we have been now taught that you have placed us in this world to love and serve you, and that by doing so we will be happy for ever in heaven. O Lord ! how can we sufficiently thank you for promising us so great a reward for so small a price ! We are created for heaven ! Ah ! good Lord ! pardon us for our past forgetfulness of this glorious end, and we promise you that, henceforth, we shall endeavour to learn everything necessary to gain heaven, and to do everything which you require of us, to love and serve you faithfully during our lives, that we may enjoy you for ever in the life to come. Amen.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE NATURE AND PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

Q. How many Gods are there ?

A. There is but one God, who will reward the good and punish the wicked.

1. That “there is but one God” is one of those great truths which no one can for a moment doubt ; a truth made known to us by reason equally as by revelation. The idea of many Gods is opposed to reason, for God is a being infinitely perfect, essentially independent, and consequently one only. For if there were two Gods, they would be either equal to each other, or unequal. If they were in all respects equal, neither would be God, for neither would be *infinitely* perfect ; if unequal, it is clear that the inferior could not be God. Besides, if the world was ruled by many masters, that beautiful arrangement of all its parts, which now delights the eye, would then be wanting. That there is but one God is equally clear from revelation : “Hear, O Israel ! the

Lord your God is one, and there are no other Gods but He" (*Deut.*, vi.). "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all" (*Eph.*, iv.).

2. God "will reward the good" by placing them hereafter in His heavenly kingdom, and seating them on a throne of glory with Jesus Christ, in company with all the bright angels and saints. In that blessed country there will be neither hunger nor thirst, nor pain nor labour; but the good shall for ever enjoy peace, content, and happiness. God will punish the wicked by casting them into hell-fire, and condemning them for ever to those eternal flames, where the worm dies not, and the fire is not extinguished; where they shall have no rest night or day, no comfort, no peace, no ease—no, not so much as a single drop of water to cool their burning tongues. Yes, the wicked shall be banished for ever from the presence of God, shut out from the kingdom of heaven, and cut off from the joys of the saints.

Q. Where is God?

A. God is everywhere, but He is said to be principally in Heaven, where He manifests Himself to the blessed.

3. Yes, dear children, "God is everywhere"; there is no place where God is not; as holy Job says, "He is higher than heaven", and "He is deeper than hell", and "the measure of Him is longer than the earth and deeper than the sea". "God is immense, He fills the heavens and the earth" (*Wisdom*, xi.). "It is in Him that we live, and move, and have our being" (*Acts*, xvii.). In every place His influence is felt; nothing can exist without Him. God is present "everywhere"; He is in heaven, where He compenses His faithful servants; He is in purgatory,

where He purifies, by salutary punishment, all those souls who departed this world without having made full satisfaction to His justice ; He is on earth, where He governs everything by His providence ; He is in hell, where He exercises justice on the wicked. "If I ascend", says the prophet David, "into heaven, Thou art there ; if I descend into hell, Thou art also there". God is "everywhere"—in heaven, in the blue skies, in the air which we breathe, in the rain, and in the sunshine. God is on the earth, and on all the length and breadth of it—He is in the deep waters of the sea. God is in the green fields where you walk, in the streets through which you pass—He is in the house in which you live—in the room where you sit down. God is in the school where you are taught your lessons—in the chapel where you say your prayers. God is in the crowded city—He is in the sandy desert, where no foot of man ever trod. "But He is said to be principally in heaven", because it is there that He presents Himself to the view of the angels and saints, in all His glory and majesty. For this reason it is that we are told by Jesus Christ, in the Lord's Prayer, to say, "Our Father, who art in heaven". Let us often, then, dear children, raise our hearts to heaven, where, if we serve God here, we shall one day behold Him face to face in all His brightness and glory.

4. Ah ! children, never forget that ; always recollect that wherever you are, and to whatever place you go, God is always near you ; for bearing that in mind will prevent you from falling into sin. "Walk in my presence", says God to Abraham, "and be perfect". All the saints have done so. We read in the prophet Daniel (chap. xiii.) that the chaste Susanna was solicited to sin by two shameless old men. The virtuous woman blushed at their horrible proposal, and lifting her eyes to heaven, she addressed herself

to them in these words : “ I am straitened on every side ; for if I do this thing it is death to me, and if I do it not I shall not escape your hands. But it is far better for me to fall into your hands without doing it, than to sin in the sight of the Lord ”.

5. Yes, said the chaste woman, I know that God sees me, and that if I consent to your impure and shameful request, He will judge me, and I shall not escape His vengeance ; and yet, if I resist you, I am certain that I will be made to feel the effect of your resentment ; but I fear God, and I prefer enduring every sort of punishment, than to consent to offend Him in His presence. Do you, children, follow the example of the chaste Susanna ; if, like her, you should meet with bad and evil disposed persons, who may tempt you to sin, forget not that you are in the presence of God, and whatever inducements or threats may be held out to you, remember that it is far better to suffer wrong at the hands of the world, than to consent to sin in the presence of the Lord.

Q. What is heaven ?

A. The kingdom of God's glory, and of His angels and saints.

6. Yes, dear children, it is in heaven that God shines forth glorious and resplendent. In heaven the veil will be removed that now conceals Him from us, and then we shall behold Him in all His majesty and beauty. Heaven is a place of repose, in which, after the labours and troubles of this world, we shall enjoy eternal rest. It is often called in Scripture “ The Holy City ”, “ The New Jerusalem ”, because the city and temple of Jerusalem, where God, in former times, manifested His glory and might, was a figure of heaven, in which God dwells and communicates Himself to the saints without reserve. Paradise or hea-

ven is a place of joy and delight, where is found and tasted everything good, beautiful, and delicious, without the slightest mixture of evil—a happy sojourn, from which is banished everything that could give the slightest pain, cause the least inconvenience or disquietude—a place where the enjoyment of happiness is such, that “eye has not seen, nor has ear heard, nor has it entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God has prepared for those who love Him” (*I. Cor.*, ii. 9).*

7. Heaven is “the kingdom of God’s glory, and of His angels and saints”, and in that delightful country we shall enjoy not the riches and pleasures of this world, but the riches of God, the possession of God Himself. In this world we sometimes feel happy, but oftener feel sad; but in heaven we shall always be happy, for we will for ever and ever be looking on God’s beautiful and glorious countenance; and continually beholding it, we cannot for a moment experience sadness. Sorrow and grief will never enter heaven, for, as St. John says in the Apocalypse, “they shall no more hunger nor thirst, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more” (*xxi. 4*). Yes, pain and sorrow can never approach God’s saints—they are crowned with never-ending joy, and the raptures of their joy, says Isaias, shall never cease. Ah, dear children, how we should continually sigh after that happy kingdom! Our eyes and our thoughts should be always turned towards it, and when we are tempted to sin we ought to say to ourselves—if I commit this sin I shall lose heaven, and can never see the face of God.

Q. If God be everywhere, why do we not see Him?

A. Because He is a pure spirit, and cannot be seen by corporal eyes.

8. Yes, God is a "pure spirit". A *spirit* is an intelligent being, that is, a being having the faculty of thinking, reasoning, feeling, reflecting, of willing and deciding in favour of one object in preference to another—a being which we can neither see, nor touch, nor understand, and which, not being composed of parts, can neither be decomposed nor changed. We call a "pure spirit" a spirit which has no body. A body is a being which has neither intelligence nor will, but which we can see, touch, and understand, and which, being composed of different parts, can be decomposed and altered. A body we can cut asunder and change. Every day we see bodies or material substances change, assume different forms, corrupt, and rot. It is not so of spirits. There is, then, a very great difference between a spirit and a body. God is not a body, but He is a spirit, and a "pure spirit", and this "pure spirit" is infinitely perfect, for God has not only understanding and knowledge, but He knows and understands everything, the past, the present, and the future, things actual and things possible. God has neither body nor figure, and so "cannot be seen by corporal eyes". Being a spirit, we cannot see Him, we cannot touch Him; He cannot fall under any one of our senses, for He has neither colour, nor form, nor figure—He has nothing material, nothing corporal, nothing sensible, and so we can neither see, touch, nor feel Him.

Q. Since God has no body, why does the Scripture make mention of the eyes of God, of the hands of God, of the feet of God?

A. These expressions should not be taken in their literal sense, but should be understood in a figurative sense.

9. It is true that the Scriptures speak of the eyes

of God, of His hands, His ears, His feet, of the power of His arm. But that is figurative language, which the sacred writers make use of to accommodate themselves to our weak understandings, and to make known to us, by means of sensible images, the perfections and operations of God. When they speak to us of the eyes of God, it is that we may the better understand that God sees everything. When they tell us of the ears of God, it is for the purpose of making known to us that God hears everything. When they speak of His hands, it is that we may know that God does everything. When they tell us that the arm of God is not shortened, it is that we should know that the power of God is always the same—that His power is without limits, and that there is nothing that we may not expect from His infinite goodness. And when the Scriptures represent to us all creatures prostrated at the feet of God, and as if annihilated in His presence, it is for the purpose of clearly pointing out to us His great majesty, and how absolute is the dominion which He exercises over everything which He has drawn out of nothing.

10. You see, then, dear children, in what manner we are to understand those expressions in the sacred Scriptures—the *hands, eyes, ears, and feet of God*. God has really neither hands, nor arms, nor feet, nor eyes, nor ears, “because He is a pure spirit”. If sometimes He appeared to the patriarchs, it was under a borrowed form, and not in His own proper substance—in His own divine essence. In the fourth century some heretics started up, who asserted that God had a human body and figure, taking in a literal sense the words hands, eyes, feet, and other similar expressions occurring in Scripture, which were intended to be understood only figuratively. These heretics, called *Anthromorphites*, a word derived from

two Greek words, *ανθρωπος*, a man, and *μορφη*, a form, were at once condemned by the Church.

Q. Does God see us?

A. He does, and continually watches over us.

11. Yes, dear children, "God sees us" and everything. Nothing can be concealed from His penetrating eye. Though we should hide ourselves in the thickest forest, though we should bury ourselves in the deepest and darkest cave, we could not, even for a moment, escape His watchful eye, for, as the Scriptures say, "He pierces even the deepest abyss". He sees, at a glance, everything, past, present, and future. Everything that has been said and done from the beginning of the world is present to Him. Everything going on, at this moment, through every part of the world, as well as everything that will take place for thousands and thousands of years yet to come, is clearly seen by Him, so that not a single act escapes His all-searching glance. He sees, at one glance, all the crimes that have ever been committed ; all the crimes that are being committed at this moment ; and all the crimes that will be committed to the end of time. He sees all the good works which the just of the Old Law have performed ; all the works of charity and mercy which have been practised for more than eighteen hundred years by the saints ; all those which are now practised every day ; and all those which shall be done as long as the world exists. God not only sees what is present, but He beholds the past and the future, or rather, with regard to God, there is no past or future ; everything is present to Him. In one glance He takes in everything, as nothing can be concealed from the ever-watchful eye of *Him who is*.†

12. And for a child who loves God, how sweet and

consoling it is to think that God is continually looking down on him, noting down his good works and words, and that not even one single kind act or expression is hidden from His eye. Oh, what a sweet, delightful thought that is ! But for one who has surrendered his soul to Satan, for one who is every day adding sin to sin, what a dreadful reflection it is to think that God is always looking down on him, and that every evil act he commits is seen by Him ! Ah ! take care, then, dear children, never to do, say, or think of anything that might offend the eye of God. If any of you wish to do a sinful act, let him say to himself—" Let me first find some place where God will not see me". Think always that God is present, and sees all that you do and say, and then you will surely not do in His presence what you would be ashamed to do in the presence of one of your companions : " Walk always in the presence of God and you will never sin" (*Gen., xvii. 1*).†

Q. Does God know all things ?

A. Yes ; "all things are naked open to His eyes", even our most secret thoughts and actions.

13. As God sees everything, so He also "knows all things". He has a perfect knowledge of what has been done from eternity, and what will be done during all future time. He knows better than we ourselves do what is passing in our hearts. He knows you and every one of His creatures. He knows every grain of sand upon the earth. He knows every flower in the field, every tree in the forest, every beast, and every insect on the earth. He knows every fish that swims in the water, and every bird that flies in the air. He knows every star in the skies. God knows every angel in heaven, and every man, woman, and child on earth. He knows every hair on your head,

every motion of your body, every thought of your heart. God knows everything that has been done from eternity, and everything that will be done during all future time. The knowledge of angels and men is limited ; but the knowledge of God has no limits. "Behold, O Lord", says king David, "Thou hast known all things, the last, and those of old ; Thy knowledge is become wonderful to me ; it is high, and I cannot reach it" (*Psalm, cxxxviii.*).

14. "Even our most secret thoughts and actions" God knows. He knows all our desires, all our wishes, all our affections. As a glare of light penetrates the thickest gloom, so does the eye of God penetrate our inmost hearts. We can conceal the desires of our hearts from men, but we can never conceal them from God. When Jesus Christ was on this earth, He more than once gave proofs of His clear knowledge of the secrets of the heart. *Why do evil thoughts possess your minds?* He said on one occasion to those about Him. When, then, dear children, your minds are taken up with revengeful or impure thoughts, when you are thinking on some improper thing, when you have thoughts of beating one of your companions, recollect that God sees all your desires, that He knows them, and will know them for ever. He also sees your good works, and your kind words, your gentle demeanour, your submission to your parents and teachers, your attention in church, and your devotion at your prayers.

Q. Has God known from all eternity the free actions of intelligent creatures ?

A. Yes ; God has known from all eternity the free actions of intelligent creatures.

15. God is infinitely perfect, and so is immutable, and His knowledge is infinite. But if He had not known, from all eternity, the free actions of intelli-

gent creatures, that is, the actions which depend on their will—which they can do or not do just as they please—His knowledge would not be infinite, as it would not extend to those voluntary actions. If God had no knowledge, from all eternity, of the actions of intelligent creatures; if these actions were not present to His mind except when they had taken place, He would not be unchangeable in His knowledge, as in that case He would be every day acquiring a fresh stock of knowledge—He would not be immutable in His wishes and decrees, for He would be obliged continually to modify and change them, as He would meet in the actions of men, not foreseen by Him, a thousand and a thousand obstacles to their execution. Therefore, God knew from all eternity the free voluntary actions of intelligent beings: “For I know”, said the Lord, “their thoughts, and what they are about to do this day, before that I bring them into the land which I have promised them” (*Deut.*, xxxi. 21). This attribute of God, by which He knows infallibly everything to come, is called *prescience*, or *prevision*.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ST. IGNATIUS, AND HIS HOPE OF HEAVEN.

* St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, who suffered martyrdom in the year 107, thus writes in his epistle to the Romans: “I ardently desire to meet the beasts which are in readiness to devour me. I fear your powerful intercession with the Almighty might, perhaps, delay my death; but in delaying my death you would delay my happiness. But be silent in my behalf, and I shall soon be happy in the enjoyment of God. Let me quickly pass out of this lower world unto God, that by dying for Him I may rise in glory. The possession of all the kingdoms of the earth could not make me happy. All earthly objects are indifferent to me; the hope of possessing God my Saviour solely draws and engages my whole at-

tention. Let flames reduce my body to ashes ; let me expire by slow degrees on a cross ; let lions and tigers grind my bones, and tear me limb from limb—I shall suffer all with joy, trusting in the grace of my Redeemer, Christ, who stands ready to reward our short sufferings with a crown of everlasting glory. If your charity for me be sincere, you will let me go to enjoy my God ; let me become the food of beasts, that I may soon be united to my Lord ; let me tread the footsteps of my suffering Jesus ; let not your prayers delay my entrance into life by delaying my death".

ST. THOMAS OF AQUIN, AND THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

† When St. Thomas of Aquin was on the point of death, one of his spiritual brothers entreated him to give him a rule for his guidance through life. "Whoever", said the saint to him, "shall walk always in the presence of God, will be prepared at all times to render an account of his actions, and shall never forfeit His love by consenting to sin". A simple and solid instruction, but very seldom practised.

THE BROTHER AND SISTER, AND GOD EVERYWHERE.

‡ One day, while their parents were from home, Augustus said to his sister Sophia : "Let us go and eat some of the sweet pies, for we have now no reason to fear, as we have the house to ourselves". "Agreed", answered Sophia, "provided no one will see us". "Very good, let us then go into the dairy, and then we can feast without any one seeing us". "But, brother, perhaps the man who cuts up the timber in the street may see us". "Well, then, let us retire into the pantry and —" "But do you forget that a woman is working outside the window, and that she could see and hear us?" "In that case, then, let us descend into the cellar, and as it is so very dark no one can see us". "O my brother, you mistake, and let me explain your error. Is not God present everywhere? Does not His eye pierce through the thickest wall? Does He not see us in the most secret place?" Augustus first blushed and looked down, then, embracing his sister, he said to her : "You have spoken the truth; nothing can be hid from God ; it is vain that we seek for dark places to offend Him ; He sees everything that we do, and one day He will punish us for the evil we do".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What is the reason that there can be only one God ?

2. Shall God reward the good and punish the wicked ?
3. In how many places is God, and where does He reside principally ?
4. Should we often think of the presence of God, and why ?
5. What answer did Susanna give to the old men ?
6. What is heaven called in Scripture ?
7. What will constitute our happiness in heaven ?
8. What do you understand by saying that God is a pure spirit ?
9. If God be a spirit, why do the Scriptures speak of the eyes, hands, etc., of God ?
10. How are we to understand these words—eyes, hands, and arms, of God ?
11. Does God always see us, and everything we do ?
12. Ought we feel happy at knowing that God always sees us ?
13. Does God know everything, past, present, and future ?
14. Are our secret thoughts known by God ?
15. Could God be unchangeable, if He did not know the free actions of intelligent beings ?

PRACTICE.

1. Remember that God is in every place, and that He sees us in the most lonely places, and that nothing can be hid from His watchful eye. If we always think of this, we shall never sin.
2. Think often of heaven and its delightful enjoyments ; and whenever you are tempted to sin, say—If I consent to this sin I may lose heaven.
3. Recollect that God not only sees what you are doing, but He even sees every thought of your mind ; and as God sees all your thoughts, never let your heart be sullied by evil desires.

PRAYER.

We have now learned, O Lord, that your eye is always on us, and that anything we do and think of is clearly seen by you. We very seldom thought of this before, O Jesus ! and, forgetful of your presence, often committed what was offensive and displeasing to you. But we now promise that in whatever place we be, whether in church, school, or at home, we will always recollect that you are looking at us ; and we will never do, say, or think of anything that may be offensive to your pure eye. Amen.

CHAPTER III.

ON GOD THE CREATOR OF THE WORLD.

Q. Will God judge our most secret thoughts and actions?

A. Yes; “and every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment” (*Matt.*, xii. 36).

1. It is, indeed, true, dear children, that on the last day, that day on which we shall all arise from our graves, God will demand a strict account from us, not only of all that we have done and said, but also of all we have thought of in our minds. Now, our thoughts and desires cannot be known by any one in the world except we ourselves wish to tell them ; and we can think and think for years on the most wicked things, and consent to bad desires daily, and no one around us can know anything of all this ; but “on the day of judgment”, when we will appear before God, a strict account will be required of all “our most secret thoughts and actions”. Ah ! what will be our confusion on that day, when all those filthy desires which, for the whole world, we would not make known to any one, shall be brought to light by the Lord, and a strict judgment passed on them !

2. “And every idle word” that we speak we must account for on “the day of judgment”. A strict inquiry will be made by God, not only about the impure and improper words we have pronounced, but also “every idle word” we have spoken. How we should then place a guard upon our tongue, and always think before we speak, lest we should say anything displeasing to God! What a number of *idle*, frivolous words are said from morning until night by thought-

less, talkative persons. They scarcely ever reflect on what they are going to say, but let out whatever comes first to their lips, and so but too often utter injurious and uncharitable language. Guard, then, dear children, against too much speaking, and let not the tongue be that "restless evil" which St. James calls it.

Q. Had God a beginning?

A. No; He always was, and always will be.

3. God "always was". He "never had a beginning", and never will have an end. Let us look back thousands and millions of years, and again thousands and millions of years, yet God was before that time. Before the sun shone on the earth, before a grain of sand was made, God was; for He never "had any beginning". Everything but God had a beginning. Angels, men, animals, plants, trees, did not always exist; there was a time when they were not, until God, through His infinite power, created them from nothing. But there was no time at which God did not exist; and in thousands of millions of years to come, God will be then what He is now. For if God had a beginning, a time would have been when God was not, and then who could have given Him existence? If God had "a beginning", there would be some cause to which He would be indebted for His existence; but if He owed His existence to some cause, He would not be independent, and so would be wanting in one of His essential perfections, and consequently could not be God.

4. As God "always was", so too, He "always will be". All the years that are past, and all the years that are to come, are present before God, just as much as this present minute. With Him the past

and future are as the present ; for in Him nothing is past, nothing future, but all is present. He “ always will be”, for He never will have an end : “ Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever” (*Heb.*, i. 8). All creatures perish and die, but God never will die, but “ always will be”, living on for ever and ever.*

Q. Can God do all things ?

A. Yes ; with God all things are possible, and nothing can be difficult to Him.

5. All things God can do, dear children, and that without the slightest “ difficulty”, for there is nothing to limit His power. “ All things” are controlled by Him, and so, He cannot meet with any obstacle to whatever He pleases to do. God is all-powerful ; He can do anything He likes in Heaven and on earth, in the depths of the sea, as well as in the bowels of the earth. So, dear children, if He said—I wish that this house, or this church, should be removed a hundred miles from this place, you would that very instant behold the house or church moving to the place assigned it by God.

6. If He said : It is My wish that the stars should no longer shine in the sky, that the sun should no longer give light during the day, nor the moon during the night ; at that very moment the stars, the sun, and moon would withdraw their light, and we should be left in gloom and darkness for ever. Again, if He said : I wish that all the children here should become at once full-grown, learned men ; in the twinkling of an eye you would become as tall and as strong as your parents, as wise and as learned as your masters. If He said, moreover, it is My pleasure that all the inhabitants of this town or parish should at once die, all those persons would immediately fall down without motion or life. He made

the whole world by one word only, and if He wished, He could as easily create millions of worlds like the one in which we live, and even a thousand times larger and more wonderful.

7. But although God can do all things, "and nothing can be difficult to Him", He cannot do what is impossible—He cannot change the nature of things, and make a thing to be and not to be at the same time. Thus, God cannot give any created thing a quality, shape, and form which are repugnant to the nature of it; for example, He could not make a square circle, because a square circle is an absurdity. A circle is necessarily round, and that which is not round cannot be a circle. So that a square circle implies a contradiction of terms, and therefore cannot be an object, nor within the scope of the power of God. In like manner, God cannot endow a creature, which is necessarily finite and limited, with the power of creating, because creation, as we have said already, supposes an infinite power, and that infinite power no creature can possess.

8. God is all powerful; and so, dear children, we should always take particular care of never offending Him, for it is He who has placed us in this world, and preserves us from falling back into that nothingness from which He has drawn us. We are liable every moment, had we not His supporting hand, to return to the dust from which we have been formed. To revolt against Him, then, would it not be the highest piece of ingratitude? Would it not be the greatest folly, as God could, the very moment that we sin, crush us under the weight of His wrath? God is omnipotent, and so we ought to have unlimited confidence in Him, and, as He is also infinitely good, should hope for everything which can contribute to our happiness.

Q. How did God make the world?

A. By His word only, that is, by a single act
His all-powerful will.

9. To create the world—heaven and earth, and all the wonders which they contain—to create all creatures, visible and invisible—to bring forth out of nothing the sun and moon, and those thousands of stars which shine so brilliantly over our heads, cost God nothing, neither labour, nor pain, nor fatigue. To create all things cost Him “His word only”; He said, and everything was done. A general says to his army, “March”, and at once the army are marching; he tells them to wheel around, and they immediately do so. Many thousand men at once obey the word of their commander, and are put in motion by the slightest movement of his lips. That will give an idea, though indeed a very faint one, of the power of God. To create the world and everything in it, it was not indeed necessary that God should speak; He had only to exercise “a single act of His all-powerful will”; and when the Scripture says that God spoke, it does not mean that He pronounced any words, but that He willed. The word of God is His will.

Q. Why did God make the world?

A. For His *own glory*, to show His power and wisdom, and for man’s use and benefit.

10. Not out of any necessity, or through compulsion, “did God make the world”, but out of His own free will and good pleasure, and “for His *own glory*”. The word *glory*, in its ordinary signification, when applied to men, means the esteem of the good, the tribute of praise which is paid to noble qualities, to illustrious actions, to eminent merit. In this sense it is that we say fond of glory, desirous of glory, as-

quiring glory. The same word, when made use of with regard to God, has not quite that signification, and it is a matter of importance that the meaning of it in the latter sense should be well known. It belongs to an intelligent and free being, such as God is, to act through some motive and for some certain end. Only irrational beings would act otherwise. God could have no motive or end worthier or better than that of exercising His perfections, His power, His wisdom, and, in particular, His goodness. Through a motive of this sort it was that He created intelligent beings, capable of knowing and loving Him, of obeying and thanking Him. By creating intelligent beings, and for their use and benefit, inferior beings, He displays to those beings His own divine perfections—His infinite power, wisdom, and goodness, that they may give glory to Him, and render Him the just homage of love, gratitude, obedience, and praise.

11. This is what is meant by the Sacred writings, when they say, “The Lord hath made all things for Himself” (*Prov.*, xvi. 4). It is not meant that He acted through pride and vanity, to be esteemed and praised by men, or for His own utility, His own happiness or necessity; but that He has done everything in the way required by His divine perfections, and in the way in which His divine perfections could be best displayed before the eyes of men. Being sufficient for Himself, He had no need of creatures, but wishing through pure benevolence to create them, He gave them existence through a motive of His own glory, for which He has created all things—some of them material and inanimate, and from their number, their variety, their magnificent ornaments, and the admirable order reigning among them, are like so many eloquent voices sounding forth His grandeur, and bearing eternal testimony to His om-

nipotence, His wisdom, munificence, and incomparable beauty. Others, spiritual and intelligent, in concert with the first, pour forth, in strains of gratitude, their homages of adoration, obedience, and love. True, these tributes of praise and gratitude are not necessary, nor do they contribute, in the least, to the essential beatitude of God ; they are, however, very pleasing in His eyes, as being in conformity with the immutable rules of eternal order, of which He is the source, and on which He, therefore, must look with an eye of complacency.

12. "For man's use and benefit" God has created all the wonders of the world. To the benefit of man everything in nature tends. The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the mountains, the valleys, the rivers, the lakes, all have been created for the use and benefit of man. The sun and moon afford him heat and light ; the seas, rivers, and lakes afford him easy means of communication, and supply him with fish ; the valleys furnish him with corn and other means of subsistence. There is nothing in nature which cannot be made subservient to man's interests.†

Q. What time did God take to create the world ?

A. God created all things in six days.

13. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth". These are the words of Moses in the first verse of Genesis. *In the beginning* : by these words we are to understand an indefinite period, many ages, perhaps, prior to that time when the earth, created in the beginning of things, was unfolded and arranged in order. *In the beginning*, not of the first day, as some commentators hold, but in the beginning of time. Before the first creation, time had no existence ; it was only from the moment that God created heaven and earth that time began to be

marked. We must, too, observe that infinity has nothing in common with time; infinity admits neither of moments nor succession, and when modern incredulity expresses its surprise that God had not created the world earlier, when it asks if it were, indeed, necessary for God to reflect during an entire eternity before proceeding to the accomplishment of this great work, it sees not the nonsense of what it says.

14. In the beginning of time God created; He does not proceed as workmen here below, who find ready to their hand the materials of their work, and have only to mould and unite them. No, God operates immediately upon nothing, and renders it productive, for the word *create*, in Hebrew *bara*, does not mean a mere production, but a true creation—an extraction from nothing—a transition from a state of non-existence to a state of existence—a passing from a state of mere possibility to a state of real existence. “God created heaven and earth”—that is, according to the Hebrew text, He drew from nothing “heaven and earth”, the materials of the universe, that immense quantity of matter which His divine hand unfolded, and from which He arranged both our terrestrial globe and all the celestial bodies.

15. God, whose power is infinite, could have created all things in a single instant, but choosing six days to unfold this great work, and arrange it in order, He wished to teach us that He is free to do as He pleases; or to speak in a more exact and precise manner, God had created at once all the matter of which the world is composed—and this is creation, properly so called—and subsequently He was employed six days in arranging that vast matter, and informing from it the various kinds of material creatures of which the universe is composed. Undoubtedly, God could as easily do one thing as another,

as He is all-powerful ; yet, in itself, it is far easier to arrange matter already existing, than to draw it from nothing. If God, then, in a single instant, did that which is most difficult, and was employed six days in doing that which is less difficult, it follows that He wished to give us to understand, that in the arrangement of the universe He acted neither through impotence nor weakness, neither through restraint nor through necessity, but only as it pleased and when it pleased Him.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE INDIAN BOY'S PROFESSION OF ONE GOD.

* An Indian boy who had been well instructed by Christian parents in the principles of his religion, happening one day to enter a public hall where the chief men of the place were assembled, one of them commenced in a sportive way to speak to him about religion. The boy defended the religion he professed, and when, in the heat of disputation, he was called on to point out his God, "My God", answered the boy, "is the Creator of the universe ; He is a pure Spirit, and so I cannot show Him to you ; but I can very easily point out *your god*". Taking up at once a stone, on which was engraved a human figure, and then placing it in rather a ceremonious manner on the ground ; and after laying it down, he raised his foot, and giving it a kick, cast it some distance from him, saying, "See, now, *the god* which you adore". All present applauded the act of the boy, and the person who thought to jeer him about his religion retired, covered with shame and confusion.

THE MOTHER AND CHILD, ON THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

† A young girl, scarcely six years old, addressed her mother one day thus : "But, mamma, you are always telling me that God is good, and yet I have never received anything from Him". "What", said the mother, "you have never received anything from God ! Who has made the grass grow, and the corn ripen ? Who has made the trees to blossom, and then to produce fruit ? Who has made the flowers to blow ?

Who has created all the beasts and the birds and the fishes ? Who is it that showers down the rain to water the plants, and makes the sun shine out to ripen everything ? Is it not God that has done all this ? and is it not for us all that He has done it ? and is not all this a proof of His goodness towards you, and every one else ? Ah, His benefits to us are so many and so various, that we can never thank Him sufficiently for them !”

ST. ANTHONY LEARNING THE GREATNESS OF GOD FROM THE HEAVENS.

† The many philosophers who visited St. Anthony in the desert were astonished at his great wisdom, and at the deep sense of all his sayings. They asked him in what books he had discovered such science and wisdom. The saint, pointing out with one hand to heaven, and with the other to the earth: “Here is my book”, said he, “I have no other ; all persons should study it, for in it they will find God’s wisdom and power and goodness shining conspicuously ; in considering the works of God they will be filled with admiration and love of Him who has created everything”.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Shall God judge, on the last day, the secret thoughts of our hearts ?
2. Will an account be demanded of all our idle words ?
3. How can you prove that God never had a beginning ?
4. Shall God always exist ?
5. Can God do everything, no matter how difficult ?
6. Give one or two examples to explain what you mean.
7. Can God do what is absurd and repugnant to itself, and why ?
8. As God can do everything, should we offend Him ?
9. Did it require trouble on the part of God to create the world ?
10. What do you mean by saying that God made the world for His own glory ?
11. What is the meaning of the words, “The Lord made all things for Himself ” ?
12. How does man derive use and benefit from the sun, and the moon, and the seas, and the rivers ?
13. What meaning do you give to the first words of Genesis, “In the beginning God created heaven and earth” ?

14. Give the exact meaning of creating. Can it be used in speaking of the works of man?

15. Why did God take six days to create all things?

PRACTICE.

1. When you behold the sun shining out in all its glory, and lighting up and cheering everything, man, beasts, birds, and all nature, give praise and glory to God.

2. When at night you view the moon, and the countless stars twinkling over you, cast your thoughts on God, and think how powerful and wise and good He must be who has created all these wonderful things.

3. Often return Him thanks for all He has done for you, but particularly for preserving you every moment from death; and resolve to persevere in grace, that you may deserve fresh favours at His hands.

PRAYER.

O God! Creator of all things, how can we sufficiently thank you for your many kind favours! You have created us from nothing: you have made all things for our use; everything in heaven and earth is intended for us; and you preserve us every moment of our lives. If you withheld your supporting hand, we should at once fall dead; and if we happened to be in mortal sin then, we should be damned for ever. Oh! what thanks do we not owe you! From this day forward we shall serve and love you, and atone for our past ingratitude. Amen.

CHAPTER IV.

ON THE SIX DAYS OF CREATION.

Q. What did God do on the first day?

A. On the first day God made light.

1. By the first creative action of which we have just spoken, the materials of visible nature started into existence, but they were only a vast chaos. "The earth", the sacred writer tells us, "was void and

empty (invisible and without form, according to the Septuagint); darkness was spread over the face of the abyss, and the Spirit of God moved over the face of the waters". But this chaos—this immense mass of matter, sluggish and without form, is about to receive, under the hand of the Eternal Artist, a thousand and a thousand various forms in succession. The first remarkable operation of the Eternal on the matter created by Him consisted in converting an immense portion into luminous matter, and in separating this luminous matter from that which was not so. "Let there be light, and there was light". This operation of the Creator was not creating properly so called, but a simple producing, as it was exercised on matter already in existence; but it is not less the visible effect of an infinite intelligence and of an infinite power, for nothing less than an infinite intelligence and infinite power could form the ineffable elements of light, and so arrange them as to give light to chaotic matter.

2. The creation, or rather the formation of the light, anterior to that of the sun, has been considered by unbelievers so absurd, that if there were no other proof, it is enough, they say, to prove Moses an impostor. This objection is not, however, of the slightest value. The most learned men admit and regard as certain, that luminous matter exists quite independent of luminous bodies, in the same way as the matter of sound exists independent of sounding bodies.

3. This luminous substance is a certain fluid called ether, extending through space, and which surrounds and penetrates all bodies. When this ether is put into vibration, a succession of undulations in its substance follows, and this is what produces the phenomenon of light. Recent experiments made by Young, Arago, Fresnel, etc., confirm this view of the subject. So Scripture has preceded the discoveries of the

learned, and these discoveries are supported by that Sacred Writing, which a lying philosophy has unblushingly asserted to be opposed to all our physical knowledge. "God", continues the sacred writer, "saw that the light was good"; that is, that it possessed the qualities and properties suited to it in relation to His eternal designs; "and He separated the light from the darkness". This light, though separated from the chaotic matter, did not, however, as yet form those shining orbs which we now see floating through space. "He called the light Day, and the darkness Night. And there was evening and morning one day" (*Genes.*).

Q. What did God do on the second day?

A. On the second day God made the firmament, which He called heaven.

4. On the second day, dear children, God formed the terrestrial atmosphere, or the aërial region, which, on account of its apparent proximity to the starry region, received the name of heaven, or firmament. Into this aërial region He elevated a great quantity of water, or an aqueous substance, in the form of clouds, and the other portion of the aqueous matter remained mixed and confounded with the earth, or earthly matter. Such is the meaning of these words of Genesis:—"And God said: Let there be a firmament made amidst the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made a firmament, and divided the waters that were under the firmament from the waters that were above the firmament, and it was so. And God called the firmament heaven; and the evening and the morning were the second day". This second day consisted, as well as the first, of a time of darkness, and of a time of light. It may be that the earth, turning already on its axis, presented in succession its surface to the light which was

reated, or formed, on the first day, and supposed to be stationary ; or it may be that this light rolled itself successively about the earth, yet stationary.

Q. What did God do on the third day ?

A. On the third day God gathered the waters in one place, and this vast collection of waters He called seas.

5. God having divided the waters into two portions, and having left on the earth only the quantity which suited His designs, and the use which He intended should be made of it, ordered, on the third day, that they should be gathered into one place, and that the earth should become visible. At once, children, the waters, obeying His voice, were collected into one place, and the land appeared. Mountains and hills rose up with their valleys ; fountains, brooks, and rivers freshened up the dry land, and poured themselves into the sea. To effect this, God must have formed vast reservoirs to contain the sea ; He must have raised on all sides banks above the bed of the waters ; He must have given a downward course to the rivers that they may discharge themselves into the sea. All this includes wonders without number, and we should unceasingly admire the supreme wisdom which confines the sea within its limits, and imposes a law on the waters not to pass beyond the bounds assigned it.*

6. Those limits have never been overstepped, and that very element which appears most intractable, breaks down in its billowy pride against a mere grain of sand ; further it is ordained that it cannot go. Separated from the water, which is formed into an immense sea, the earth becomes at once fruitful in all kinds of plants, flowers, and shrubs, which are invested with the property of bearing seeds in order to propagate and multiply their species. This is what we learn from the words of Genesis : " God also

said : Let the waters that are under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry lands appear. And it was so done. And God called the dry land earth : and the gathering together of the waters He called seas. And God saw that it was good. And He said : Let the earth bring forth the green herb, and such as may seed, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after its kind, which may have seed in itself upon the earth. And it was so done. And the earth brought forth the green herb, and such as yieldeth seed according to its kind, and the tree that beareth fruit having seed each one according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day" (*Gen.*, i. 9-13).

Q. What did God do on the fourth day ?

A. On the fourth day God made the sun, the moon, and the stars.

7. On the fourth day, dear children, God formed the sun, the moon, the planets, the comets, the stars, and all the heavenly globes. The materials of these different bodies existed since the first day of creation, but they still required the intelligence and action of God, the Eternal Architect, to become a visible world, such as it now appears to our eyes. It is God Himself who has formed them into globes of different natures and of various sizes ; it is He who has placed and arranged them at various distances from each other, according to His eternal designs ; it is He who has given to each of them that peculiar action and movement, from which flows an admirable harmony through all, and who subjects them to a small number of general laws, which His wisdom freely established, and which His power can at any time suspend. " And God said : Let there be lights made in the firmament of heaven, to divide the day and the

night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years. To shine in the firmament of heaven, and to give light upon the earth. And it was so done. And God made two great lights; a greater light to rule the day, and a lesser light to rule the night: and the stars. And He set them in the firmament of heaven to shine upon the earth, and to rule the day and the night, and to divide the light and the darkness. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day" (*Gen.*, i. 14-19).

8. The firmament of heaven spoken of here is not the same as that formed by God on the second day. By the firmament is meant not the space occupied by the atmospheric air, but another region more elevated, another space which is filled with ethereal matter. It was in this region, the extent of which we can neither measure nor conceive, that God placed the stars, and the two great luminaries which are to the earth the sources of light and heat. The sun is so far removed from the earth, that it may give us light without dazzling the sight, and that it may warm without scorching us. If the sun were nearer, the earth would be burnt and sterile; if it were more distant, the earth would be frozen. The beautiful planet, the moon, renders us the greatest services. It lessens the great darkness of the night, it regulates the labours of the field, it affords light to the traveller, and at each instant reveals to us the wisdom of the Creator.

Q. What did God do on the fifth day?

A. On the fifth day God made the fishes and the birds.

9. Yes, dear children, on the fifth day God formed, and of Himself gave life to, the different kinds of fishes which inhabit the seas and the rivers, and to all the various sorts of birds which, by the structure

of their bodies, are wonderfully adapted for flying through the air. "God also said : Let the waters bring forth the creeping creature having life, and the fowl that may fly over the earth under the firmament of heaven. And God created the great whales, and every living and moving creature which the waters brought forth, according to their kinds, and every winged fowl according to its kind. And God saw that it was good, and He blessed them, saying : "Increase and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea, and let the birds be multiplied on the earth. And the evening and the morning were the fifth day" (*Gen.*, i. 20-23). This new species of creatures, more perfect than those which preceded them, affords us a new subject of admiration.

10. That the fishes can live in the sea, which is salty, and produces nothing, is wonderful. It is also a wonder that their race has not long since been destroyed, for the larger ones continually pursue the smaller, whilst there is nothing to defend them. To protect themselves they fly towards the shore, whither the larger fishes cannot follow them ; but to provide for the larger ones, God sends them shoals of little creatures, which they swallow by thousands. From the fishes we derive many advantages—they serve as food to us, and their bones serve for many purposes ; there are some which every year visit our coasts, and are taken ; others ascend our streams to their very sources, in order to carry to all the blessings of the Creator.

11. Like the fishes, the birds also sprang from the sea, and it is a wonderful thing that the sea should, in the twinkling of an eye, have produced two species of creatures so different. The birds are a fresh proof of the infinite wisdom of the Lord. They are provided with everything necessary to protect them from the rain and cold, and to procure them subsistence.

At the approach of winter they pass into those regions where they can find the food and warmth not to be obtained elsewhere. They make their passage at the proper time, without guide, or map, or provision, and yet they never fail to reach their destination.

Q. What did God do on the sixth day?

A. On the sixth day God created domestic animals, and all the beasts of the earth, and last of all man, and on the seventh day He rested.

12. The sixth day, dear children, was employed in providing inhabitants for the solid surface of the earth. God commenced by forming different species of animals, and He ended by forming and creating the human species, which was to be the masterpiece of all His visible works.

In the first part of the sixth day God ordered the substance of the earth to produce every kind of living animals, and the earth was obedient to His command. At the command of God living animals of every kind came forth from its bosom, and ever since have been preserved and multiplied—the insects and reptiles which crawl upon the ground, the four-footed beasts of every size and every form, some savage and wild, concealing themselves in the woods and forests: others more gentle and tractable, living in friendship with man. God said: “Let the earth bring forth the living creatures in its kind, cattle and creeping things, and beasts of the earth, according to their kinds. And it was so done. And God made the beasts of the earth, according to their kinds, and everything that creepeth on the earth, after its kind. And God saw that it was good (*Gen.*, i. 24, 25). If it required an infinite intelligence and an infinite power to bestow on different vegetable substances that ineffable form and organization which we so

much admire, how much more must an infinite intelligence be required to conceive and put into operation the still more admirable mechanism which we observe in the different kinds of animals which inhabit the earth, the air, and the waters !

13. The second part of the sixth day was signalized by the formation and creation of the human species—man, destined to be the king of the universe, and in particular of the place which, in the days of his innocence, was as if his palace. The world existed as a magnificent book, in which God had written His admirable perfections, but there was no one to read it ; the world was a brilliant paradise, but there was no master to inhabit and enjoy it ; but now, as it is built and prepared to receive its master, God creates man. He is created last ; all the other great works, as intended for him, were created before him. We shall enter more at large on this subject in one or the other of the following lessons, and shall now merely relate the words of the sacred writer in reference to the creation of man : “ Again, God said : Let us make man to our image and likeness : and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth. And God created man to His own image : male and female He created them. And God blessed them, saying : Increase and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth. And God saw all the things that He had made, and they were very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day. So the heavens and earth were finished, and all the furniture of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work, which He had made ; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done” (*Gen., i. ii.*)

Q. What is the meaning of the words God rested?

A. They mean that He ceased creating.

14. We are not, dear children, to infer from the words "God rested" that He was tired and required repose. The words merely mean that He ceased creating, at least as far as the world is concerned, for this world it is that the inspired writer has in view when recounting the work of six days. Since then everything has been kept together, and made to harmonize by the unchangeable laws established by the Author of the universe. But though creation appears complete, as far as we are concerned, it is not certainly so with regard to the universe. He who, by His omnipotence, has drawn the world from nothing, is not yet idle. It may be that planets, or heavenly bodies, far larger than those visible to us, are every day created.†

15. This is the opinion of a great many learned men, an opinion which the words of our Lord would seem to confirm when He said that "His Father worketh until now" (*John*, v. 17). If such be the case, the astronomers of our days have not such grounds as they imagine for self-gratulation at their discoveries, and for considering themselves more skilled in science than those who have preceded them. For such discoveries were impossible some ages back, if such a planet or such a star was not then in existence.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES ON THE WORKS OF GOD.

* St. Francis of Sales always took occasion from everything to raise his heart to God by ejaculatory prayer, and to deduce some moral sentiment. Whenever any beautiful

plants were shown to him, he would say : " We are the field of the Father of the family, which He carefully tends, that it may bring forth fruits of justice". If a magnificent and highly ornamented church were pointed out to him : " We are", he would say, " the temples of the living God ; how ornamented our souls should be with virtues !" If he were shown beautiful flowers : " When will it be that our souls shall produce lasting fruits ?" At the view of fountains : " When shall our hearts be sources of water springing up to eternal life ?" Seeing trees, he would say : " Every tree which bears not fruit shall be cut down and cast into the fire. A good tree bears not bad fruit ". Thus, he beheld God in everything, and all things in God ; or, rather, he beheld only one thing—God.

FATHER BOUDON'S REMARKS ON THE WORKS OF GOD.

† One day, the holy priest, M. Boudon, whilst sailing along in a vessel with a great number of other passengers, observing that the passengers in their various remarks on the different things which presented themselves to their view, and in their admiration of the works of nature, never thought of ascending to Him who is the author of all nature, groaned in secret, and remained some time in a sad and pensive mood. Some who noticed his abstraction asked him the reason of it. " I am thinking ", said he, " that God, by His immensity, fills the whole universe and this vessel, and yet that no person thinks of it. When we are told to look at the animals, the trees, the houses, we look at them, and we speak about them, and though all these things speak of God, we pay no attention to Him ".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What was the appearance of things when God made the light ? How did He make the light ?
2. How do you account for the formation of light before the sun was created ?
3. How is light produced ? Is that view of the production of light confirmed by recent experiments ?
4. What do you mean by firmament or heaven, which God made on the second day ?
5. Describe what had been done on the third day, and how the seas and rivers were confined.

6. Separated from the water, what appearance does the earth present ?
 7. Are the sun, moon, and stars, which God made on the fourth day, regulated by any laws ?
 8. Is the firmament created on the fourth day, the same as that which was formed on the second day ?
 9. Describe all that God made on the fifth day.
 10. How are the fishes supported, and what are the advantages of fish ?
 11. Are the birds a proof of the wisdom of God, and how ?
 12. Mention the animals that were created in the first part of the sixth day.
 13. What did God create last of all, and can you repeat the words of Genesis in reference to the creation of man ?
 14. Has God created anything since He created the first man ?
 15. If God be still creating, what are we to think of recent discoveries ?
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CHAPTER V.

THE MOSAIC NARRATIVE CONFIRMED BY RECENT SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES.

Q. Where do we find what has been said about the creation of the world ?

A. In the book of GENESIS, the first of the five books of the *Pentateuch*, a work written by Moses under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost.*

1. What we have already said, and the details into which we are about to enter in reference to the Creation, is called the *work of six days*; and Moses' account of the beginning of things, in the first of the five books composing the *Pentateuch*, is called the *Cosmogony of Moses*. Genesis is the first of these books : it contains an abridged history of the world, and of the human race, from the Creation

* This chapter is suited only for very advanced classes.

to the birth of Moses, which happened about 1524 years before the commencement of the Christian era. This account of the world, and of the human race, was faithfully preserved in the memory of man, owing to the long lives of the patriarchs, who transmitted to their posterity, for many ages, the accounts of whatever interesting events they had either witnessed themselves, or heard from their fathers. This traditional history Moses consigned to writing, aided by the Spirit of God.

Q. Is the account of the Creation, as given by Moses, confirmed by scientific discoveries?

A. Yes, scientific discoveries confirm the account given by Moses.

2. The many discoveries which long since have been made, and are every day made in the sciences, confirm the truth of the relation of Moses. For example:—According to Genesis: “In the beginning the earth was void and empty”. From geological observations the primary soil, or the inferior layers of the earth, present everywhere the character of a crystallized deposit. Crystallization necessarily supposes that the materials thus deposited were previously in a fluid state. Again, at that period the earth was void, and altogether empty, or without vegetation—a conclusion in accordance with the account given by Moses. “On the third day”, according to Genesis, “God gathered together into one place the waters that covered the earth, and He formed the green herb and the fruit tree”. In geology, it is this exactly, which the intermediate bed of earth laid over the primary, indicates, as it is principally characterized by vegetable remains—the first appearance on the earth of organic beings—a conclusion in conformity with the account given by Moses.

3. “On the fifth day”, according to Genesis, “God

created the living and moving creatures, which the waters brought forth, and the birds that fly over the earth, under the firmament of heaven". According to geology, the upper part or surface of the intermediate layer, and the secondary beds of earth, contain only vegetable remains, marine creatures, and some traces of birds. And this is again in accordance with Moses' account. "On the sixth day", according to Genesis, "God created the terrestrial animals". From geological observations, the tertiary beds of earth, lying on the secondary beds, are marked by the remains of those new classes of animals, which are not to be found in the under formations. The creation of man concludes the work of the Creation; and from geological observations the upper layers alone contain human bones and the remains of man's work; and this is just in conformity with the account given by Moses.

4. "We cannot too often point out", says Demerson, "to this admirable order, so perfectly in accordance with the soundest notions which form the basis of positive geology. What homage ought we not render to the inspired historian!"* "How admirably", says Cuvier, "do the deposits and the fossil† remains, in the different states of their formation in the bowels of the earth, follow exactly the order of the days on which the substances to which they have reference were created, as related by Moses! Brought up in the knowledge of the science of the Egyptians, Moses has left us a *cosmogony*, the truth of which every day's experience confirms. Geological observations are in perfect accordance with the book of Genesis, in reference to the order in which all organic beings have been successively created".

* Demerson—"Geology taught in twenty-two Lessons".

† Fossils is the name given to the worn-out remains of organized bodies found in the earth's *strata*.

5. St. Marc Girardin, a member of the French Academy, in one of his smaller works, says that he wished for his *amusement* (such is his expression) to prove the truth of what is said in Genesis of the six days of creation ; then taking up the *Treatise on Electricity and Magnetism* by M. Becquerel, he compared it with the book of Genesis, and was filled with astonishment and wonder at the perfect connection which existed between the theories of the philosopher and the narrative of Moses. Thus, from the avowal even of learned philosophers, scientific discoveries, so far from destroying the Mosaic account, only tend to confirm it, or rather, “the recent discoveries in history, in astronomy, in physics, raise the sciences up to the standard of Catholicity ; and it is certain that those sciences cannot progress truly or reasonably, until they be brought near the source and principle of all light and of all progress”.*

Q. What time has elapsed since God created the world ?

A. We cannot know with certainty how many years have passed on since God commenced the work of creation, but since He finished that work—that is, from the creation of man—we can count nearly six thousand years.

6. The Scripture tells us that “in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” ; that in that early creation there was no order, but, on the contrary, a vast chaos, an immense abyss over which the Spirit of God moved ; but it does not tell us how long it pleased God to leave the element in that state. The Scripture also tells us that afterwards God arranged His work in order, and was employed six days in perfecting it. But are those days to be considered the same in duration as our days, or are they to be considered as so many indefinite periods ? Faith

pronounces nothing with regard to this matter, and we can, without censure, adopt one or other of the many opinions held and maintained by theologians and philosophers on this question.

7. According to geologists, the bowels of the earth present us with phenomena which cannot be accounted for, except we allow myriads of years to have elapsed since the creation of matter. But if the days of which Moses speaks were not ordinary days, but indefinite portions of time, the subject meets with an easy solution. The opinion that the six days of creation were not ordinary days can be maintained without the slightest compromise of Catholic doctrine, and in support of that opinion the following proofs can be given :—Firstly, the Hebrew word *yom*, from which the Latin word *dies*, day, has been translated, is often taken in Scripture for an epoch, an indefinite space of time ; this is at least the opinion of a great many commentators on the Sacred Writings. Secondly, it is quite evident, say the supporters of this opinion, that the duration of the three first days must be to us an indefinite period, as we can neither refer them to, nor compare them with, any known standard, as the planets destined to point out the times and seasons, the days and the nights, were not then in existence, not being formed until the fourth day. And as Moses makes no distinction between the three first and the three last days, the inference will follow that the word *day*, preceded by the terms *first* and *second*, was made use of by him to determine the order of the successive creations composing the universe, and not for pointing out any definite space of time. Thirdly, St. Augustine says,* “that we should not hastily pronounce on the nature of the six days of creation, nor assert that they were similar to our ordinary days”. Alluding to the same subject in his celebrated

* S. Augustin, Gen. B. iv., Ns. 44.

work* *Of the City of God*, he adds, "that it is difficult and even impossible for us to imagine, and even more so to say, what might be the nature of those days". There is nothing, therefore, to prevent one from maintaining that those days were indefinite during which took place those successive creations described in the book of Genesis.

9. If we prefer to consider the days of creation as ordinary days, and maintain, at the same time, that the phenomena observed in the bowels of the earth cannot be explained except by allowing that thousands and millions of years elapsed since the creation of matter, we can account for those phenomena by admitting that an indefinite period of time elapsed since the first creation of matter until the perfect arrangement and complete ordering of that matter, described by Moses; and that during that indefinite period, admitted by St. Gregory of Nazianzen, and by many other Fathers of the early ages of the Church, there had been a series of productions, changes, dislocations, and disruptions, then vegetable and animal reproductions; and these constitute the *successive formations* which are the objects of geological inquiries.

10. The opinion which we have just touched on is now adopted by many scientific scholars, and particularly by the learned William Buckland, who, in his celebrated "Treatise on Geology and Mineralogy in Connection with Natural Theology", endeavours to prove that all the geological phenomena which the earth presents, have taken place within that indefinite period of time mentioned in the first verse of Genesis: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth". The word *beginning*, he says, has been ap-

* Qui dies cuiusmodi sint, aut per difficile nobis, aut etiam impossibile est cogitare, quanto magis dicere. [De Civ. Dei, lib. i. ch. vi.]

plied by Moses to that indefinite period anterior to that great revolution which has changed the face of our globe, and anterior to the creation of the vegetable and animal species. During that long period series of different revolutions could have taken place, which the sacred historian passed over in silence as being entirely foreign to the account of the human race. We do not find it anywhere stated, he continues, that God created heaven and earth the *first day*, but the words are that He created them *in the beginning*, and this *beginning* might be a very remote epoch, so far back as not to be counted by years; and that between the *beginning* and the *first day* of creation an innumerable series of years might have elapsed, during which all those physical revolutions might have occurred, the traces of which geologists have discovered.*

11. The second verse, "The earth was void and empty", describes the state of the earth on the evening of the first day (for Moses adopted the Judaical method of dividing time—every day is counted from the evening to the beginning of the following morning), and this first evening can be considered as the end of that indefinite period of time which elapsed from the primary creation mentioned in the first verse, and as the commencement of the six days which were employed in unfolding and arranging its matter, and placing it in a condition necessary for the reception of the human species. According to this view of the subject, God might have created, in the beginning, heaven and earth, and not merely the materials of heaven and earth. The state of confusion and emptiness in which the earth is represented in the second verse of Genesis, might indicate the wreck and ruin of an anterior world; and God, in saying, "Let there be light", might have substituted the light which had already been in existence, for the

darkness which, during countless ages, enveloped the ruins of this ancient world.†

12. Neither one or the other of these opinions, we repeat, has been condemned by the Church, and both those views can be reconciled with the Catholic rule of Scripture interpretation.

13. However, the system of those who consider the six days of creation as ordinary days, and who maintain that the arrangement of the universe had taken place in those six days, would appear more in conformity with the literal meaning of the words of Genesis : “ Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy works ; but on the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all things that are in them, and rested on the seventh day : therefore, the Lord blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it ” (*Exodus*, xx. 9, 10, 11). If the Sabbath day, then, be not a figurative day, meaning the eternal rest of the Creator—many hold that it is—but a natural day, of twenty-four hours, the other six days of creation must be considered so too, and not as unlimited periods, for no distinction is made between the days of creation and the Sabbath day.

14. With regard to the successive *strata*, or layers, observed under the surface of the earth, and which require, it is said, many thousand years for their formation, a solution can, without much difficulty, be given. Could not God, in creating the world, have at once impressed on it those marks of antiquity, which it could have received during the lapse of many ages ? Again, could not those different *strata* of the earth be caused by the deluge ? Or could they not be formed in the beds of the waters during the time that elapsed from the creation of man to the deluge ? Among the learned there is a diversity of opinion on the subject, some maintaining one view of the ques-

tion, others supporting the contrary view ; the world, in the words of the Scripture, is given up to *the vain disputationes of men*. But it is unnecessary to say again that Christianity is in no way compromised by these different systems, and we can adopt, consistently with faith, one or the other of them, because the Church has made no decision one way or the other on this subject.

15. From what has been said, it follows that we cannot with certainty say what time has elapsed since the work of primitive creation. How long “*the earth was void and empty, and darkness was on the face of the deep*”, we cannot tell ; but those many opinions and different systems cannot prevent us from assigning the creation of man to a particular period, for it is generally admitted that not more than six thousand years have elapsed since Adam, the first man, was created.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

RIGHT HONOURABLE AND REV. FRANCIS HENRY, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER.

* The Earl of Bridgewater, dying in 1829, made a will directing certain trustees to invest in the public funds £8,000, which sum was to be at the disposal of the president of the Royal Society of Lon on, and to be given to persons selected by him, to each of whom should write, print, and publish 1,000 copies of a work “On the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God as manifested in the Creation”. Rev. Dr. Buckland was appointed to write a treatise on geology and mineralogy in their connections with natural theology. In this work, which met with immense circulation, occurs a chapter headed “Geological discoveries are in accordance with the Sacred Writings”.

THE SIX DAYS OF CREATION.

† Now it appears to us that the great event with which the opening verses of the Mosaic narrative begins, the creation of the heavens and the earth, isnot represented as a part of

the work that was accomplished within the six days. It is not said that *on the first day* God created the heavens and the earth, but *in the beginning*. Besides, the sacred writer, uniformly throughout the chapter, employs one and the same peculiar phrase to introduce the work of each successive day. In describing the operations of God on the second day, he begins : " And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters"; on the third day, " And God said, Let the waters that are under the heavens be gathered together into one place"; on the fourth : " And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens, to divide the day from the night"; on the fifth : " And God said, Let the waters bring forth the creeping thing having life"; on the sixth : " And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after its kind". Hence, when we meet this same phrase for the first time in the third verse : " And God said, let there be light", we may reasonably suppose that the work of the first day began with the decree which is set forth in these words. If so, it plainly follows that we may allow the existence of created matter before that particular epoch of time which, in the language of Moses, is styled the First Day; for, before the creation of light, the heavens and the earth were already in existence, and the earth was waste and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep, and the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.—*Geology and Revelation, by the Rev. Gerald Molloy, D.D.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Where do we find the history of the Creation as given by Moses, and by what means was the history of the Creation, and of the human race, preserved up to the time of Moses?
2. Explain how the Mosaic account and recent discoveries in geology accord?
3. Of what are the secondary and tertiary beds of earth composed?
4. What remarks have been made by Demerson and Cuvier on this subject?
5. What conclusion has St. Marc Girardin come to after examining this subject?
6. Are the six days of creation to be counted as ordinary days, of twenty-four hours each, and is it contrary to Scripture to assert the contrary?

7. What proofs are given in support of the opinion that the six days of creation are not ordinary days of twenty-four hours?

8. What does St. Augustine say on the subject?

9. How can we explain the phenomena observed in the bowels of the earth, if we admit that the days of creation were only of twenty-four hours' duration each?

10. What opinion does the celebrated Dr. Buckland give on this subject?

11. What interpretation does he give to the second verse of Genesis?

12. Can those opinions be reconciled with the Catholic rule of Scripture interpretation?

13. Is it more in conformity with the literal meaning of the words of Genesis that the six days of creation were ordinary days of twenty-four hours each?

14. In that case, how do you explain the phenomena under the surface of the earth?

15. If we cannot say, with certainty, what time elapsed since primitive creation, can we know how long ago it is since the first man was created?

CHAPTER VI.

ON THE CREATION AND NATURE OF MAN.

Q. What is man?

A. One of God's creatures, composed of a body and soul, and made to God's likeness.

1. The subject of our entertainment on to-day, children, shall be ourselves. What are we? Whence have we come? Why have we been created? On this very important subject we are now about to speak, and I do not know anything better calculated to excite your curiosity and fix your attention. "Man", that is, all and every one of us, men, women, children, are "God's creatures", being formed by His hand. We are, too, reasonable creatures, that is, capable of knowing, reasoning, and acting in any

manner we please. The word *rational* distinguishes man from many other creatures ; it distinguishes him from birds, from beasts. We certainly have flesh and blood, and motion and life, as other animals, but we possess what they have not, intelligence and reason.

2. "Man" is "composed of a body and soul"; and in this respect he differs from the angels. Like man, angels are rational creatures, but, unlike him, they have no body. We have already mentioned that man was not created until the sixth day, and that of all created things he was the last formed ; for, as the world was created for him, and as he was to be the master of it, God deferred his creation until the world was prepared to receive him. A king is not introduced to his palace, says St. Augustine, until everything in it is so arranged as to render his reception honourable. It is in this way that God has acted towards man. Oh ! the goodness and love of God.

3. When God created the light, and the sun and moon, and the different kind of animals, He merely said, Let it be done ; and it was done : *Let there be light ; and there was light.* But when man was to be created, the three persons of the adorable Trinity seem to have consulted together, and now God does not merely say, Let there be man, but He says, *Let us make man to our own image and likeness.* And how does He create him ? As he is to live among corporal beings, he receives a body, and as he is to serve and praise his Maker, he receives a soul. To form the body of man, God took the slime of the earth, and this earth, arranged by His divine hand, becomes a most beautiful and lovely figure. The slime of the earth is changed into flesh, into blood, into nerves, forming that admirable body which we possess—that open countenance, which is capable of so many varied expressions—that noble forehead,

indicating genius and intelligence—those eyes, in which, as in a mirror, are clearly represented millions of objects—that majestic carriage, which makes man respected by all other created animals; and yet all this has been produced from dust. Oh! how wonderful is God in His works!

4. Yet these are not the only wonders of the creation of man. “God having formed man of the slime of the earth, breathed on his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul” (*Gen.*, ii. 7). The breath of God is a spiritual, intelligent, and active substance; a spirit, a soul, which God drew from nothing, and which He created to *His image and likeness*; a soul capable of knowing, loving, and freely acting; a soul giving movement and life to our bodies. You know, children, that when an artist or tradesman intends to execute something *very good*, a *masterpiece* of workmanship, he first reflects, and thinks over it, and deliberates about it. And why did God, when about to create man, take counsel with Himself, except to let us see that the work which He was to perform should surpass everything done by Him up to that time—that we are above all His works—and that of all created visible beings we are the noblest and the most favoured. Could God raise us to a higher rank of honour? Could we be formed on a more beautiful model than on that of the adorable Trinity?*

5. Ah! dear children, let us be always careful to preserve that divine likeness. Never, by consenting to sin, disfigure the likeness of God, to which you are made. To disfigure your soul, which is the image of God, would draw down on you the severe chastisements of heaven. If a child took the picture of his father hanging on his neck, and not only indecently daubed it, but dragged it through the mire, what punishment would be too severe for him? But, oh!

what frightful punishments does not a sinner deserve, who degrades in his person the image of God, by giving himself up to his wicked desires !

Q. In what is man made to God's likeness ?
A. In his soul.

6. Yes, it is only "in his soul" that man is like unto God. Man consists, as we have already said, of two distinct substances, a body originally formed of the slime of the earth, and which shall again fall into dust, and a soul created to the image and likeness of God—that is, an immortal soul, gifted with understanding, liberty, and will. Man, as to His body, bears no resemblance to God, for God, as we have said before, has no body—neither eyes, hands, nor feet, but is a spirit, endowed, in an eminent manner, with thought, will, understanding, and every other spiritual perfection. It must be then as to "his soul" that man is "made to God's likeness", for man thinks, wills, deliberates, reasons—faculties which are possessed in an eminent manner by God. Man thinks—that is, he can form ideas of things, and distinguish one thing from another. He wills—that is, he is gifted with a faculty or power of choosing between two or more objects, and selecting one in preference to the other. But these powers must belong to the soul, for the body in itself can neither think, nor judge, nor move, nor perform any function of life. Yes, dear children, it is the soul that makes us feel, think, and will, and also that makes us act. Our eyes, ears, tongue, and all the members of the body, are controlled by the soul. The eyes are fixed in any direction that the soul wishes ; and the mouth is opened or closed as the soul directs ; and we move or remain motionless according to the dictates of the soul.

Q. In what is man's soul like to God?

A. In being a spirit and immortal, and in being capable of knowing and loving God.

7. Our soul is "like to God" because it is a spirit like God, endowed with memory, understanding, and liberty. The soul is "a spirit", for it falls not under any of our senses—that is, we can neither see it nor feel it, and because it is only a spirit that can think, reflect, judge, and act, for mere matter is incapable of performing these operations. In whatever light we view matter, we only can conceive that it has length and breadth, thickness and form, but we cannot conceive it to *think*, or to *feel*, or to *judge*. But we have not the least doubt that we ourselves *think*, *wish*, *know*, and *reflect*; therefore, we must have within us a *spiritual* principle, which is no other than the soul.

8. The soul is capable of knowing and loving God; but the knowledge and love of God the soul could not be capable of, except it were a pure spirit resembling God. As the soul is a spirit, and immortal, and can think, and feel, and judge, it is as to this soul that we are like to God, for God has no body, as you have been told before, but is a pure spirit; and as our souls are pure spirits, it is they that are made to the image of God. Ah! dear children, how careful we should be to preserve our innocence, and persevere in virtue, for virtue and goodness should be the ornaments of a soul created to the image of God.†

Q. What do you mean when you say the soul is immortal?

A. I mean it can never die.

9. Yes, indeed, the soul can never die. Faith, equally as reason, teaches us this truth. God Him-

self says that our souls are created to His image and likeness. But God has no body, as He is a pure Spirit ; and as our souls are created to His likeness, they must then be pure spirits, and so can never die. Nothing can perish or die but what can be disunited. If you take off the roof of a house, and throw down the walls, the house no longer exists, for its parts have been disjoined. But the soul has no parts, for it is a spirit, and therefore cannot be destroyed. Whatever thinks and reflects is spiritual, for mere matter is incapable of thinking and reasoning. If matter could think, then it would follow that a block of stone, a piece of wood, a lump of clay, are so many reflecting beings. But, children, is there any person that could assert such a thing, opposed as it is to experience, reason, and common sense ?

10. There is another proof, and that a familiar one, which can be given that the soul is a *spirit*, and so can never die. Is it not true that you very well understand what has been already said to you, on God, on His perfections, and on the Creation of the world ? But tell me is it your body that understands all this ? Are they your eyes that have seen the meaning of what I explained to you ? Are they your ears that have understood the truths which I announced to you ? No. Your eyes, indeed, see that I am speaking to you, but they do not see the subjects of my discourse ; your ears, indeed, hear the words which I pronounce, but they do not understand the truth of what I say. For example, when I say to you, "God created the world in six days", your ears, indeed, hear all these words, but it is not your ears that understand the truth of them. Now, suppose it were God's will that he among you who knows his Catechism best should die in an instant, and that I should continue repeating to him the very words that he now understands so well : "God created the world in six days"—he

would not then understand a single word of it. And yet his ears and his eyes would be the same as they were before ; no change would take place in their form. They are not the ears, then, that understand, they are not the eyes that see ; it is something else. There is, then, something in us besides the body ; something that thinks, that understands, that reasons ; and that thing is called our soul.

11. There is nothing that can destroy the soul except God. But God will not destroy it, for He tells us in almost every page of His sacred writings, that His will is that the soul should never die, but live for ever. "The wicked", says Jesus Christ, "shall be condemned to eternal punishment, but the just shall enter into life everlasting".

12. How contrary to reason, then, are those sentiments which we sometimes hear from the mouths of persons as ignorant as they are immoral. *When we die, they say, all will be then over with us, there will be no more of us.* What folly ! what madness to stand up in opposition to the Word of God and the unanimous voice of all ages ! Ah ! is God not a God of wisdom, of justice, and of goodness ? What frightful blasphemy to deny it ! Let you, dear children, act more wisely. Always believe in the life to come, and from time to time repeat that act of faith—*I believe in life everlasting.* If this article of your belief be deeply engraven in your hearts, it will at the hour of death smoothen your passage from this life to the next.

Q. Have any persons denied that the soul is a spirit, and immaterial ?

A. Yes, it has been denied by Materialists that the soul is spiritual, and their frightful system is called Materialism.

13. The name *Materialists* is applied not only to those who maintain that everything in existence, not

even excepting God Himself, is matter, but also to those who, whilst admitting an *increated* Spirit and a Creator, deny the existence of *created spirits*. The latter are called *Moderate Materialists*; they are in general members of the medical profession, and the greater number of medical works are more or less tainted with this destructive doctrine. Very little need be said on a subject so absurd, and on a doctrine so subversive of the very foundations of religion and morality. For if the soul be material, it will perish with the body; if the soul perish with the body, then there will be no future punishments, and we can without fear or remorse surrender ourselves up to the commission of every crime, provided we take the necessary precautions against the strokes of human justice. Is there one who can look without horror on such a doctrine, involving, as *Materialism* does, such frightful and lamentable consequences?†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ST. AUGUSTIN, AND HIS IDEA OF GOD.

* The Catholic doctrine is, that man is made to the image of God. St. Augustin, before his conversion, concluded that such being the faith of Catholics, they must adore a corporeal God; but having afterwards discovered that this opinion was unfounded, and opposed to the faith of Catholics, he rejected it, and reproached himself for forming a judgment so rash. According to Catholic teaching, man has been formed, as to his soul, but not as to his body, to the likeness of God.

THE MISSIONARY, AND THE CARE OF THE SOUL.

† A certain missionary, seeing that the greatest care and attention was paid to a horse by the owner of it, spoke to him thus:—"My friend, how much time does it take you every day to keep your horse in such fine condition?" "Two hours", he replied. "I have another question to ask you", said the missionary, "and I expect a candid answer:—How

much time do you give every day to the care of your soul ? What is it you do for your salvation ?" The other answered candidly :—" Every morning I bless myself, and I say an *Our Father*; I sometimes add a *Hail Mary*. On Sunday I am never absent from Mass, but I go to that chapel where I am not long detained ; and that is all I do". The missionary then said :—" As you have so little care of your soul, and such great care of your horse, if I belonged to you I would sooner be your horse than your soul. Of what advantage to you is your horse, or all that you possess, if through neglect you lose your soul, and condemn it to eternal torments hereafter ?"

THE YOUNG INFIDEL, AND HIS DENIAL OF THE SOUL.

‡ A young libertine, travelling one day in a steam carriage, made an open avowal of his infidelity by asserting that man had no soul, but, like other inferior animals, was nothing else than matter. " Who has ever seen a soul ?" he asked. Some who were in the carriage with him laughed out, and apparently approved of his sentiment ; but the greater number did not conceal their dislike of himself and of his opinion. Two there were who seemed to argue the point. " If ", said one, " we have no soul, we are then merely a lump of flesh ; but I can never be persuaded that mere flesh and blood can think, reason, feel, judge, suffer, experience pleasing sensations, love, hate, fear, and desire ". " There is no necessity in disputing the question with the gentleman ", sarcastically observed the other ; " he has satisfactorily proved to us that *he is only a beast*". The sarcasm told ; the young infidel hung down his head and said no more.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What has been the subject of this lecture, and what distinguishes us from other animals ?
2. In what does man differ from the angels, and why was man created on the sixth day ?
3. What did God say in creating man, and how did He form him ?
4. Why did God take counsel with Himself when about creating man ?
5. What disfigures the image of God, to which we are made ?

6. What is man's body without his soul?
7. Assign some reasons why the soul is a spirit.
8. Could the soul know and love God if it were not a spirit?
9. How do you prove that the soul can never die?
10. Is it the eyes and ears of the body that see and hear?
11. What does God say in Scripture as to man's soul?
12. Is it folly, no less than blasphemy, to assert that the soul shall die, and what should be our practice in reference to this subject?
13. What do you understand by Materialists, and what consequences flow from the doctrine of Materialism?

PRACTICE.

1. Never forget that you have been created by God for a noble end.
2. Recollect that sin disfigures the likeness of God in your soul.
3. Remember that the soul shall live for ever, though the body be crumbled into dust.

PRAYER.

My God, we return Thee thanks for the knowledge we have now acquired. We can never be sufficiently grateful to Thee for giving us souls like unto Thyself? Oh! how great are we, and at the same time how little! We are great as to our souls, for they have been formed to Thy image. We are little as to our bodies, for they have been formed of dust, and will again return to dust. O Lord! grant that whilst our souls are united to our bodies, we may always serve and please Thee here below, so as to desire to see Thee face to face, for ever, in the kingdom of heaven. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

ON THE SOUL AND THE END OF ITS CREATION.

Q. Why did God give us souls capable of knowing and loving Him?

A. That we might fulfil the end for which He made us.

1. God bestowed on each of us, dear children, a free soul. That our soul is free, and enjoys full

liberty, we know from experience. There is not one of us who does not know that he can perform some particular act, or not perform it, just as he pleases ; that he can walk or remain still, speak or be silent, pray or not pray ; that he can avoid the evil which he does, or perform the good which he does not, if he so wills it. That liberty of acting or not acting, which the soul enjoys, is called *free will*. God tells us in the Scriptures, that in creating man He gave him full power over his own acts, so that he could decide on any one thing in preference to another. “God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel” (*Eccle. xv.*). If the soul were not free, and at liberty to do or not do as it pleases, there would be no reason why God should give us commands, and require of us to do good, and avoid evil. For if the soul was not free to do one or avoid the other, there could be no moral good or evil, and God’s precepts would be vain, and His commandments nugatory.

2. A free and immortal soul has been given us by God, dear children, “to fulfil the end for which He made us”. To that end we should direct all its powers. Thought, will, and reason should be invariably employed in gaining that end. Every sentiment of the mind, every word, every act of ours should tend to that great and glorious end. We have it in our power to refer all things to the accomplishment of that end ; and if we do not refer them to it, but abuse the faculties of the soul by converting them, as we can do, to other objects, we will in after time find that our souls have been given to us in vain.

Q. Are there any who deny that man has free will, and can act or not act as he pleases ?

A. There are some called Fatalists, who deny that man has free will.

3. According to the doctrine of *Fatalists*, man

must of *necessity* do whatever is done by him; he must yield to every impulse he receives. From a doctrine of that nature would follow the lamentable consequence that man is not an accountable being, and so, that there would be injustice in punishing him for crime, as he should necessarily have committed the act for which he received punishment. By such teaching every guilty passion, every frightful excess—rapine, murder, perjury—would be justified.

4. "But", say the *Fatalists*, "has not God foreseen, from all eternity, what has taken place, and what shall take place, in the world, to the end of time? Has He not foreseen every act of man, and is not God infallible? And if man's acts are infallibly foreseen, they must necessarily happen, for it is as impossible for man to refrain from such an act as it is for the prescience of God to be deceived?" In answer to this objection against free will in man, we must first be allowed to say that the term *foreseeing* cannot, in a strict sense, be applied to God. There is no past or future in reference to Him, for everything is present to God. Man *foresees*, and is often deceived. God *sees*, and is never deceived.

5. St. Augustin and St. Gregory would not allow this knowledge of God to be called *prescience*, but simply *science* or knowledge. But how can the *foreknowledge* or knowledge of God destroy the liberty of man? That it should take away our liberty it must be the necessary cause of our acts; but such is not the case. Our acts proceed from our own will and determination, and are not the effect of God's *prescience*. They are, indeed, *foreseen*, but foreseeing anything is not producing that thing, it is only knowing it beforehand. When I see any one committing a robbery, or foresee that he will commit it, how can my seeing or foreseeing influence the act, or be the

cause of it? And if it cannot, it does not deprive him who acts, of his liberty. So, too, foreseeing an act on the part of God has no influence on that act.

6. If, for example, God foresees that Peter will be a just man, does it then follow that Peter must, of necessity, be just because God foresees that he will be so? God foresees that Peter will be just, because Peter chooses to be so. And what is there in this that can take away free will from Peter? Can he before whom you commit a crime, be said to concur in that crime? But God is merely a witness of the guilty acts which He foresees; because whilst warning us against the commission of those sinful acts, He furnishes us with all the means of avoiding them, and by no means concurs in their being committed. Prescience takes in the act as about to happen; but it does not in any way influence the commission of that act. The performance of the act must be supposed before the prescience of God be employed regarding it. James will not be just because God foresees that he will be so; but God foresees that James will be just, because he will be so in reality. What is there here that can interfere with James's liberty? Our acts, so far from being in any way influenced by the prescience of God, are really the cause of God's prescience regarding them.

7. On this subject let us hear the opinion of the learned Bergier:—"The certain and infallible knowledge which God has of everything that will happen here below in a thousand years, in ten thousand years to come, has no more influence on what will occur, or on the human will, than the certain and infallible knowledge which He has of what is passing at the present moment. God sees things present, such as they are, and future things, such as they will be; if they are to be the effect of physical causes. He sees them as necessary; if they are acts depend-

ing on the will of man, He sees them as voluntary and free, and they will be free since God sees them so. The prescience of God does not then destroy free will in man".

8. But it will be urged, in the words of Voltaire : by bestowing free will on man, which He foresees will be abused, has not God made him a fatal present, a gift like to that which a father bestows on his insane son when he places a knife or a sword in his hands ? To this objection, urged by Voltaire, we answer. Firstly—If free will becomes fatal, the fault is to be attributed to man alone, who abuses it. Secondly—There can be no analogy between free will in man and a sword in the hands of a madman. The madman is not master of his acts, he is incapable of reflection or deliberation ; but the man on whom free will has been bestowed is enlightened with understanding, and can act according to the light of that understanding. Passion may sometimes blind the understanding, but it can never destroy the will. The comparison is bad on other grounds. A father cannot be always present with his son to direct the use of the sword, or to afford aid in proportion to the danger which he runs from the fatal instrument ; but heavenly lights and the assistance of grace are always at hand in support of our liberty. Voltaire's comparison cannot, then, hold good under any respect. *Materialists* and *Fatalists* have been more than once condemned by the Church.*

Q. For what end did God make us ?

A. To know, love, and serve Him here on earth, and after to see and enjoy Him for ever in heaven.

9. Not for the purpose of eating and drinking and amusing ourselves in this world has God created us ; such is not the end of our creation. To know God, to

love God, to serve God, should be our chief concern through life, for we have been placed in this world for no other end. In the first place we are obliged to "know" God; that is, to learn what He is, and what He has done for us; to think often of His many favours, and of the rewards He has promised us. In the next place we should "love" God; that is, we should prefer Him before anything in this world, and attach ourselves to Him as to the best of all masters, and to the most generous and kindest of all friends. And again, we should "serve Him"; that is, to do His will in all things, to observe faithfully His commandments; to pray often to Him; to obey our parents, for they hold the place of God in our regard; and to perform the duties of our state of life.

10. This is the end of our creation, and if you fulfil this end—knowing God, loving God, and serving God—you "shall after see and enjoy Him for ever in heaven". Yes, when you die you shall go to heaven, and see God face to face—see Him in all His glory and brightness as the angels see Him, and for never-ending ages you shall be blessed with His divine presence. Oh, dear children, how noble is your origin, and how grand is your destiny! God has made you for Himself and for His own glory. You are placed for a few years in this world to serve Him, that you may reign with Him for ever in heaven. Oh! what great difference between you and the animals that you see around you on every side!

11. They are made for this world; their form inclines to the earth; on the earth they crawl; they cannot know God; but you are children of heaven; you walk with head erect, with eyes looking up to your true country, that happy sojourn for which you have been made. When you look up to heaven, how your thoughts and desires should be directed there too! Oh, how you should have heaven in view in the

performance of every act, often thinking and speaking of that happy place! Let not the world nor the things of the world estrange your heart from God. The world is not our dwelling; we shall soon leave it; and then if we have served God, we shall fly into the bosom of Him who created us. "You have made us for yourself", says St. Augustin, "and our hearts shall never rest until they repose in you".

Q. How can we know God on earth?

A. By learning the truths which He has taught us.

12. Yes, it is only by learning what God has taught that we can know Him. If we wish to "know God," and how good and wise, and how powerful He is, we must learn what "He has taught us"—what He has said of Himself, and all that He has said about ourselves; why we were made, how we should live, and where we shall go when we die. To learn these, and other truths, is to "know God on earth."

Q. Where shall we find the truths God has taught us?

A. They are chiefly contained in the Apostles' Creed

13. Of all "the truths God has taught us" the most important, and the most necessary to be known and believed, are "contained in the Apostles' Creed" Every Christian should know the Apostles' Creed, because without knowing the principal mysteries of our religion we cannot know God, and so cannot save our souls. No matter how just and good we are, no matter how edifying our lives be, if we are ignorant of some of the principal articles of our religion, we can never enjoy the happiness of seeing God.

14. The sum of our belief is generally called the Creed, because it commences with the Latin word *Credo*. It is often called *symbol* from a Greek word, meaning a mark or signal, because it distinguishes the Christian from the unbeliever, and points out, as the disciples of Jesus Christ, those who profess it. It is, again, called *symbol*, because it has been the result of a conference or meeting of the Apostles, and because it is a summary of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, that is, its principal articles contained in a few words. It is called the "Apostles' Creed" because it was composed by the Apostles before they had separated to go and preach the Gospel through the whole world, according to the order they had received from their divine Master. As a learned and kind master selects the leading points of his instructions, in order that his pupils may better understand and recollect them, so the Apostles formed an abridgment of the heavenly doctrines they had to teach, in order to consult for our wants.

15. That it was composed by the Apostles there can be no doubt, for at every time it was called the "Apostles' Creed" and the traditions of the Church have assigned it to them. Besides the Apostles' Creed, there are three others, called the Nicene, the Constantinople, and the Athanasian Creed; but in substance there is but one, as faith is only one, and the three latter do not differ from the first, except that they explain, at greater length, certain points of faith. The Nicene Creed is read at Mass on Sundays, and the Athanasian creed is read in the first part of the Sunday Office, recited by priests.†

16. St. Ambrose, a great doctor of the Church, calls the creed the standard which marshals the Christian army, and the signal which attracts us to the same point of faith. "It is a venerable seal", he says, "which we bear on our breasts, and which is our

characteristic mark. Every morning we ought to recite it, and clothe ourselves with it as with a defensive armour, against the enemies of our faith. A soldier should never march to battle, nor repose in his tent, without having always before his eyes the oath which he has taken to defend his king and country. We are the soldiers of Jesus Christ ; we have to battle continually for truth and virtue. Our symbol is our standard, our rallying cry, our buckler — let us always carry it about us in all our engagements. Let us recite it every day with faith and devotion, at home and abroad, on the road and in the field, in sorrow and tribulations as well as in gladness and prosperity. By day and night let us bear this heavenly armour, that we may fight, overcome, and scatter to the right and to the left the devils, our own evil passions, and whatever other enemies may assail us.”

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ST. AUGUSTIN AND EVODIUS ON THE SOUL.

* St. Augustin used to relate the following history to his friend Evodius, in order to make him understand how the soul can see without the aid of the senses : “ You know well our dear brother Gennadius, the eminent physician, who, after practising with great credit to himself for many years in Rome, is now a resident of Carthage. I need not tell you, I am sure, how religious he was, and how great was his goodness and charity to the poor. He had a particular love for the poor from his early days, and yet, for many years, he did not believe in a future life. But God would not long leave one so kind and tender-hearted towards the poor in blindness and error. One night he saw, in a dream, a young man of surpassing beauty, who said to him : ‘ Follow me, Gennadius’. He dreamt that he at once followed him, and that he arrived at a certain town, which he had no sooner entered,

than he heard on his right the most delightful and enchanting strains of music. As he was burning with anxiety to know what this meant, the young man, his guide, said to him : ‘These are the songs of the blessed inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem’. He then awoke, the dream vanished, and he thought no more of it for that day. On the following night the same young man appeared to him, and asked him if he knew him. ‘Perfectly well’, said Gennadius. ‘But where have you seen me?’ again asked the young man. Gennadius, who remembering well the delicious music which he heard in the place to which he was the night before conducted by the young man, at once told him the place, and the circumstances connected with it. ‘But were you awake, or was it in a dream, that you saw me before?’ ‘In a dream’, answered Gennadius. ‘True’, said the youth, ‘it was in a dream that you beheld me, and what you now see and hear is only a dream’. Gennadius assented. ‘And where now is your body?’ asked the young man. ‘In my bed’, replied Gennadius. ‘And are you aware’, added the youth, ‘that your eyes are at this present moment closed, and that it is not by their aid that you now see?’ ‘I well know all that’, said Gennadius. ‘By what means then do you see?’ continued the other. And as Gennadius hesitated at the question, and had no satisfactory answer to give, the youth told him why it was that he proposed these questions to him. ‘You are fully aware’, he said, ‘that the eyes of your body are at present closed and without motion; that you are in bed, and that you are now asleep; and yet you know and see everything which is occurring to you at this moment. In like manner, when you die, you will again live, and you will be able to see and feel, though the eyes of your body will be without sight’.*

THE PLACE IN WHICH THE APOSTLES' CREED WAS COMPOSED.

† There is still seen, near Jerusalem, a cistern where it is said the Apostles assembled and composed the Creed, which is called after them, before they separated to preach the Gospel through the whole world. This cistern, formed like a cave, is about twenty paces in length; the vault is supported by twelve arches in honour of the twelve Apostles. Chateaubriand makes the following reflection on the symbol of our faith : “ Whilst the entire world adored, in the face of day, a thousand shameful deities, twelve fishermen, concealed

* Life of St. Augustin.

under ground, drew up a profession of faith for the whole human race, and acknowledged the unity of God, the Creator of the sun and stars, in the light of which they dared not yet proclaim His existence. If any proud Roman of Augustus' court, in passing by this cave, had seen these twelve poor Jews who drew up the Creed, in what contempt would he hold that superstitious band! with what disdain would he have spoken of these early believers!"

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. How do you prove that the soul of man enjoys full liberty?
2. Why has a free soul been bestowed on us?
3. What is the doctrine of Fatalists, and what would be the consequences of it?
4. What reasons do Fatalists assign in support of their opinion?
5. How do you show that the *prescience* of God destroys not the liberty of man?
6. Give a familiar illustration of your argument.
7. What does the learned Bergier say on this subject?
8. What has Voltaire urged against the doctrine of free will in man?
9. What do you understand by knowing, loving, and serving God?
10. By fulfilling the end for which we were created, what reward shall we receive?
11. Does the form of man point out the end for which he was created?
12. Whilst we are here on earth, by what means can we know God?
13. Should every Christian know the Apostles' Creed?
14. Why is it called Creed? Why the Apostles' Creed?
15. Is it certain that the Creed was composed by the Apostles?
16. What are the words of St. Ambrose in reference to the Creed?

PRACTICE.

1. Let us think on heaven, and the glorious things reserved in that blessed mansion for those who serve God.
2. Let us learn the Creed, and the meaning of its articles, and firmly believe what it contains.
3. Let us often recite it with faith and devotion.

PRAYER.

O Paradise ! the blessed country for which I have been created, and which, if I serve God now, will be my eternal dwelling ! Oh ! how all my thoughts and desires should be continually turned towards that happy country ! Have I hitherto often thought of heaven ? Have I laboured to arrive at that delightful mansion ? Ah, no ! My thoughts have been continually taken up with this miserable world, and I have altogether lost sight of my true country. But for the future Heaven shall engage all my thoughts, all my desires. When I am surrounded by trials and difficulties, in sorrow and suffering, I will ever look up to heaven, and from the thought of it I will derive hope, consolation, and joy. O Paradise ! when will the happy day come when I shall leave this wretched earth, and enter thy joyful abodes to praise, honour, and glorify the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER VIII.

ON THE PRINCIPAL MYSTERIES OF RELIGION.

Q. What does the Apostles' Creed contain?

A. The principal mysteries of religion, and other necessary articles.

1. The "Apostles' Creed", as we have said before, contains the most important and necessary articles of our religion. It comprises twelve articles which are the foundation of the Christian religion. The articles in the first part of the Creed have reference to God the Father ; to the Incarnation, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension of His Son Jesus Christ ; to the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Blessed Trinity ; and to the Catholic Church. The remaining articles regard the means of salvation, and our future destiny —prayer, remission of sins, judgment, resurrection, and eternal life.

Q. Which are the principal mysteries of religion?

A. The Unity and Trinity of God, the Incarnation, Death, and Resurrection of Our Saviour.

2. Yes, these five mysteries are “the principal mysteries of religion”, as they are more important than all the others; for they regard God and His Son, Jesus Christ. And if we be ignorant of them, we cannot know, love, or serve God: and not knowing how to love and serve God, we can never enter heaven, but shall be banished from God’s presence for ever.

Q. Why are they called principal mysteries?

A. Because they are most necessary to be explicitly believed, and because all other mysteries of religion are grounded on them (*John*, xvii. 3).

3. They are “called principal mysteries” for another reason, and that is, because *each* and *every one* of them must be known and be believed in itself, for, *we must know what we believe*. It will not be enough to include them with all the other truths revealed God in one general act of faith, as when you say—*I firmly believe, O my God! everything which you have revealed to your Church*. That general belief will not be sufficient. The “principal mysteries” must be believed in *particular*, each one in itself, and so necessary is this belief, that without it we cannot be saved. With regard to a great many other articles of our religion, an *implicit* belief in them, or a belief in them taken together, when proposed to us, is all that is required from us, but we must profess our belief in *each* and *every one* of the “principal mysteries”. How earnestly, then, should we apply ourselves to gain a knowledge of them, and what attention should we pay to the explanation of those “principal mys-

teries", that the knowledge of them may be so engraved on our minds, that we may never forget them.

4. The "principal mysteries" are the foundation of all other mysteries. From God, and from the Incarnation and Death of His Son Jesus, flow all the other articles of our religion. Our creation, forgiveness of sin, death, resurrection, judgment, heaven, and many other mysteries, are "grounded" or depend on the principal ones. If you take away the latter the former could not exist. If there were no God, there could be no creature; if Jesus Christ had not become man, our sins could not be forgiven, nor could we enter heaven if Jesus Christ had not arisen from the dead, we never could ascend to glory.

Q. What do you mean by mysteries of religion?

A. Revealed truths which we cannot comprehend.

5. The word *mystery*, derived from a Greek word, signifies a thing which the mind of man cannot comprehend, or reason of itself cannot discover. A *mystery* is a truth surpassing, though not contrary to reason; for if it were contrary to reason it could not be a *truth*. "Mysteries of religion", then, mean all those sacred truths, which God has made known to us through the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Evangelists, and which we cannot by any process of reasoning comprehend; as, for example, that that there is only one God, and yet that there are three persons in God; that Jesus Christ became man, and died for us. These are "truths revealed" or made known to us by God, but which reason, left to itself, could never discover nor can ever explain. A religious *mystery* is, we repeat, incomprehensible, but that is no reason why we should not believe in it, for there are many things in nature which we believe, although we cannot

understand them. We believe, for instance, that the bread which we eat is changed into the substance of our body, and yet we cannot understand how this change takes place. Again, we believe that a seed sown in the ground will in a short time rot, and from that rotten seed a sprout will shoot up, which in a few years will become a large tree, ornamented with leaves, flowers and fruit; but how this takes place we cannot understand.*

6. There are mysteries in all sciences. What mysteries connected with physics! What is the nature of electricity? What is the cause of all the wonderful phenomena resulting from it? In this as well as in many other things we must avow our utter ignorance. How many mysteries in physiology and psychology! In what way is the soul united to the body? In what way does the soul act on the body, and the body on the soul? Is not this a mystery to us? We believe these and many other mysteries in nature, because we have daily experience of their existence. But is not the word of God a more powerful motive for believing the "mysteries of religion"? The mysteries of nature we know and believe on the testimony of our senses—a testimony liable to deceive us, and which has often deceived us; but the word of God on which we believe the "mysteries of religion" can never deceive us.

Q. Does God require of us to believe mysteries of religion?

A. Yes, God requires of us to pay the homage of our understanding, and to submit our will to Him in all things. (*Rom. x. 10*).

7. Yes, He does; for as everything taught or revealed by Him is absolutely true, whenever we know anything to be His doctrine, we must either believe

it to be a real truth, or, by refusing to believe it, suppose Him to be guilty of telling a lie, which would be the highest insult to His infinite wisdom and veracity. He expressly requires this homage of our understanding from us, and makes our believing Him by faith a necessary condition of salvation. For as He is the only Saviour of mankind, who, by shedding His blood, redeemed all men from their sins and from the slavery of Satan, so all who wish to partake of His salvation must acknowlege Him as their Redeemer, and believe in Him : “He that believeth not is already condemned, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God” (*John*, iii. 18). No matter how difficult those things be, which God has taught us ; though we neither see them nor comprehend them, yet we must believe them, and prefer His word before our own proud judgment, our senses, our reason, and “submit our will” in everything He has taught us, to his Divine Authority.

Q. How do we pay the homage of our understanding to God ?

A. By firmly believing on God’s unerring word whatever He has revealed, be it ever so incomprehensible to us.

8. The mysteries of religion which God has revealed or made known to men, we cannot comprehend. They surpass the natural lights of our understanding, and appear even contrary to our reason ; they are dark and obscure. We cannot explain them ; why they exist, and in what manner they exist we are unable to tell. That there are three distinct Persons in one God, we believe, but we cannot show or prove how this can be. Reason is altogether in the dark with regard to this and other mysteries. But as God has told us that these things are so—

and God's word is unerring, it never deceives, what He says must necessarily be true—we should give absolute and entire credit to His words, no matter how difficult and "incomprehensible to us" those truths are which He has taught us. "Firmly believing," without the least doubt or hesitation, all things that "He has revealed," though they be above our reason, and apparently contrary to our reason—submitting altogether our judgment to Him in all things, *whether we understand them or not*, and believing with full and perfect conviction all the truths which He has made known, because we have His infallible word for their truth; this is paying "the homage of our understanding to God." †

Q. How do we submit our will to God?

A. By cheerfully doing, in obedience to God, all things whatsoever He commands.

9. To submit our will to God, is to perform with pleasure, joy, and satisfaction everything, no matter how painful and difficult, which God commands. Cheerfulness and joy should appear in all we do for Him. If a cross be sent us by our Heavenly Father, we shold bear it without murmuring; if a difficulty is to be undergone, let us undergo it without showing any regret. As a good son obeys the commands of his father at once, and with eagerness and pleasure, so should we obey, with a willing and grateful heart, everything that God requires of us. When God speaks, we should be all activity, all readiness in obeying Him. If we did but know the master who commands us, how faithfully and diligently should we comply with His orders! With what care, with what fidelity, with what zeal and eagerness, should we serve Him! Let us always, dear children, recollect, that, in obeying God we obey one that will

bestow rich rewards on His servants; and recollecting this, His precepts will appear easy ; we will be filled with ardour and courage in the performance of what He requires ; every difficulty will vanish, and every obstacle will be removed. If we " submit our will to God " in all our trials through life, and " cheerfully " run on in the way of His commandments, it will be a great source of consolation to us in our last moments, to look back on our past lives, and find that we " cheerfully " and faithfully served Him. Will not that be a happy and beautiful thought when we are dying ?

Q. What means the unity of God ?

A. It means there is but one God, and there cannot be more Gods than one (*Eph.*, iv. 6).

10. Yes, "there is but one God", and that one God is all-wise, all-powerful, and, as we said before, never had a beginning, and will never have an end. It is a matter of no little surprise, that a truth so evident and clear as that was scarcely known before the coming of Christ, except by the Jews. All other nations were sunk into idolatry ; that is, they adored a great number of gods, and some of them paid divine worship to animals, reptiles, even to trees and plants. It was only when the Gospel of Christ had been preached, that the different nations of the world believed in one only God, and were convinced of the crime and folly of adoring many gods. God Himself tells us that He is one only : "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord" (*Deut.*, vi. 4). "See ye that I alone am, and there is no other God besides Me" (*Deut.*, xxxii. 39).

Q. Why cannot there be more Gods than one ?

A. Because God, being a supreme and sovereign Lord, cannot have an equal.

11. "More Gods than one" there cannot be, dear

children, because two or three or twenty Gods are impossible ; for, as Tertullian says, to multiply deities is to destroy the Deity. God is "a supreme" being. He is all-wise, all-powerful. But He could not be a "supreme" being, nor all-wise, nor all-powerful, if He had "an equal", as, in that case, everything would not depend on Him, because He could have no power over the being equal to Him. So then, if there were "more Gods than one", there could not be a God *infinitely* powerful. Two supreme beings could not exist, nor can they be supposed ; for the one would not allow the supremacy of the other, each having an equal, over whom he could have no power. "For Thou art great and dost wonderful things : Thou art God alone", says David (*Psalms*, lxxxv. 10). "One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all", says St. Paul (*Eph.*, iv. 5).

12. Manes, an heresiarch who lived in the third century, admitted two necessary beings who created and formed the world—one essentially good, and the other essentially bad. This heresy was, from his name, called *Manicheism*. He taught that the good and bad principles had originally each its empire, divided by certain bounds. The philosopher Bayle, by repeating the objections of Manes against the unity of God, revived the doctrine of this noted impostor, a doctrine untenable and absurd. A necessary principle or being should be essentially perfect ; but a principle essentially bad is on that account an imperfect being, for it would perfectly know everything that is good, and at the same time would detest it ; it would, in like manner, know everything bad, and would, at the same time, love it. Again, the two necessary beings would be either equal to each other in power, or one would be superior to the other. In the first case, there would be neither good nor evil in

the world. In the latter case, there would be either good or evil, a thing contrary to the present state of the world. It is true that many evils exist in the world, but in order to reconcile their existence with the goodness of God, we need not have recourse to two principles—one good, and the other bad. With the goodness of God, the evils of this world can be easily reconciled. This we have explained in the first chapter, and the arguments need not be repeated here.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE PRINCESS AND THE BLIND MAN.

* A certain princess, who had lost her faith, had one night a dream which, in the words of Bossuet, was the first touch of a merciful Providence, wishing to lead her back to the truth. She dreamt that she was walking alone one day in a forest, and there met a blind man. She stopped on meeting him to inquire if he were born blind, or had lost his sight through some accident. He answered that he was blind from his birth. "You know not, then", she said, "how beautiful and delightful light is, and you are ignorant of the glory and lustre of the sun". "I have never", said the blind man, "looked on that object pronounced so glorious and grand, and cannot form any idea of it; yet I believe", continued he, "that it is a ravishing spectacle". Then the voice and countenance of the blind man appeared to change, and, speaking in a tone of solemnity and warning, he addressed her thus: "My example ought to teach you that the most excellent and most admirable things are hidden from our view, and that they are not the less true, nor the less to be desired, though we cannot comprehend them".

THE PHILOSOPHER'S ANSWER.

† A great many persons repaired to the house of a certain philosopher, and informed him that they had been sent to him to know if he could clearly tell them who is God. The philosopher answered them by saying: "*I will think over it, return to me in eight days*". At the expiration of that time, the persons deputed to wait on him made their appearance

at his house, but they received the very same answer : *Return to me in eight days.* And when they did return at the end of eight days, the same words were repeated to them. At length, tired of always getting the same answer, they asked how long would he continue telling them to return in eight days. "As long", he replied, "as you continue proposing the same question. I know well that there is a God. I know that God exists; but to tell you who He is, or what His nature be, I am, and will for ever be, unable".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. How many articles are contained in the Apostles' Creed, and to what have they reference ?
2. Why are the principal mysteries most necessary to be known ?
3. Must we know and believe each and every one of the principal mysteries in itself ?
4. Do all the other mysteries of religion depend upon the five principal ones ?
5. Can we comprehend the mysteries of religion ?
6. Are there mysteries connected with the sciences of nature ?
7. Should we believe everything which God has taught us, no matter how difficult it be ?
8. Though we cannot understand mysteries, should we believe them firmly, and without the slightest hesitation ?
9. How can we best show that we are submissive to the will of God ? What are the motives that should induce us to submit patiently to His appointments ?
10. Before the coming of Christ, was it generally known that there was only one God ?
11. Why could there not be two, or three, or more Gods, instead of one ?
12. What is the nature of the doctrine of Manicheism ?

PRACTICE.

1. Have always a firm belief in all the mysteries of religion.
2. Often, during life, make a profession of faith in the principal mysteries.
3. Never in any case, or under any circumstances, deny your belief in the principal mysteries of religion.

PRAYER.

"O Lord ! how incomprehensible are Thy judgments, and how unsearchable are Thy ways". Thy mysterious truths we cannot understand ; yet, Lord, we firmly believe all that Thou hast taught us, because Thy word can never deceive us. Thy sacred mysteries we shall always revere and honour, and however incomprehensible they be to us, we shall ever profess our belief in them. In heaven, the glorious light of Thy countenance shall render clear and intelligible what is now dark and hidden from us. May we serve Thee here, O Lord ! so as to deserve to behold and fully know Thee hereafter. Amen.

CHAPTER IX.

ON THE TRINITY.

Q How many persons are there in God ?

A. Three Divine Persons, really distinct and equal in all things (*I. John, v. 7*).

1. The word *person* means an intelligent being, complete in everything peculiar to his species, and, consequently, capable of performing all those varied operations of the species or class to which he belongs. Our body, considered apart from the soul, is not a person, because our body of itself does not form a complete whole, but only a part of man. But each of us, dear children, is a person, because each of us is composed of a body and soul, and so forms one complete whole—a perfect individual—which the body or soul, taken separately, does not. Our reason, no less than our faith, tells us that there is but one God, and that there cannot be more Gods than one. But our faith goes further, by telling us that, in this one only God, there are three Divine Persons, having, in common, the same Divine nature, but each distinct in Himself.

2. The word *person*, in reference to God, is not found in Scripture. The Church adopts that word, in order to show that the three Divine Persons are not merely three different denominations, or three different aspects, of one and the same divine and undivided nature, but that there are really in God three distinct subsistences. It is clear, however, that the word person, when applied to God, has not the same signification as when applied to man. When applied to man, *three persons* mean three men, or three individual human natures; but when applied to God, three persons are one and the same Divine nature. The "three Divine Persons" are "equal in all things", because they have one and the same Divine nature; they are all three infinitely great, infinitely powerful, and infinitely wise, for they constitute one God, infinitely wise and powerful.

Q. How do you call the three Divine Persons?
A. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

3. Such are the names given in Scripture to the three Divine Persons: "There are three who bear testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one" (*I. John*, v. 7). Here the trinity of persons, and the unity of the Godhead, are expressly declared. The Apostles are commanded to baptize "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". In the *name*, and not *in the names*, to show there is but one God; and "of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", to show that there are three Persons in God. The first Person is called "the Father", because from all eternity He begot the Son, who is consubstantial to Him; the second Person is called "the Son", because the Son proceeds from the Father by generation.

4. The third Person is called “the Holy Ghost”, or *Spirit*, from the Latin word *spiritus*, which means *breath*, because He proceeds from the Father and Son by *spiration*, a word used by theologians—though very imperfect—to express the reciprocal love by which the Father and Son are united. And as the love of the Father and Son is *holy* and pure, the Spirit which proceeds from them is *holy*. Oh! how we should always adore, praise, and bless “the three Divine Persons”, and for ever return them thanks for their many favours to us. We should never cease thanking the Father for creating us, the Son for redeeming us, and the Holy Ghost for sanctifying us.

Q. Is the Father God?

A. Yes, the Father is God, and the first Person of the Blessed Trinity.

5. We have already told you, dear children, that the Divine nature, necessarily *one*, is common to the three Persons of the Trinity. It is whole and entire in the Person of the Father, whole and entire in the Person of the Son, and whole and entire in the Person of the Holy Ghost. That each of the three Divine Persons is God, can easily be shown. The Father is God; for if any of the three Divine Persons be God, the Father is so undoubtedly, because He is the *principal* of the other two. Thus, the Apostles' Creed commences in these words: “I believe in God the Father Almighty”; so, also, commences the Nicene Creed; and the Athanasian Creed, too, begins in nearly the same way. Even all those who have denied that there are three Persons in God, admit that the Father is God.

Q. Is the Son God?

A. Yes, the Son is God, and the second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

6. "The Son", or the Word, as He is named by St. John, is God too. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was nothing made that was made" (*St. John*, chap. i.). As the Word was in the *beginning*, He must, necessarily, be eternal as the Father: as He was God, He is consubstantial to the Father: as all things were made by Him, He must be God, for no one but God has the power of creating. He Himself renders testimony to His being God: "I and the Father", He says, "are one"; and could He more clearly express the equality and unity of His nature with that of His Father? Again, what can be more clear than these words of St. Paul, in speaking of the Son of God: "Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God"? (*Philip.*, ii. 6.)

In the year 319, Arius, a priest of Alexandria, denied that the Son was God, adding that He was a creature, and made out of nothing; that there was a time when He did not exist, and that He was capable of sinning, with other such impieties. This impious doctrine was condemned in the Council of Nice, held in 325. In that Council it was defined, "that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born of the Father before all ages, God of God, Light of light, true God of true God, begotten and not made, *consubstantial to the Father*, and that by Him all things have been made".*

Q. Is the Holy Ghost God?

A. Yes, the Holy Ghost is God, and the third Person of the Blessed Trinity.

7. That the Holy Ghost, equally with the Father and Son, is God, we learn from that passage in the Acts of the Apostles, in which St. Peter reproaches

Ananias : " Why hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost ? . . . Thou hast not lied to man, but to God ". The Holy Ghost is then God. He is possessed of infinite knowledge and perfection, which belong only to God ; for St. Paul tells us, that " the things, also, that are of God, no man knoweth but the Spirit of God " (*I. Cor., ii. 10*). The Father is, then, God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God. In the fourth century, Macedonius, Patriarch of Constantinople, attacked the divinity and the consubstantiality of the Holy Ghost. He was condemned in the year 381, in the General Council of Constantinople. In that Council the divinity of the Holy Ghost was established, and in very explicit terms : " I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Lifegiver, who proceeds from the Father and Son, who with the Father and Son is equally adored and glorified, who spoke by the prophets ". The followers of Macedonius were called *Macedonians*, as the followers of Arius were called *Arians*.†

Q. What means the Blessed trinity ?

A. One God in three Divine Persons.

8. Yes. As we have said before, dear children, there is only one God, and in this one God there are three distinct Persons; but how or in what manner we cannot tell. We cannot comprehend how, having but one nature they can be three Persons ; but God understands it, and as He has revealed it to us, we should firmly believe it, and submit the light of our weak reason to His authority. " If any one " says St. Bernard, " demands *how* this can be, let it be enough for him to know that it is so ; the *how* is a mystery that we must not dive into, but respect. It would be rash to attempt sounding it ; to believe it by the light

of faith is the fruit of piety ; to know it in another life is sovereign happiness".*

9. A man distinguished for genius and learning, while walking one day on the sea-shore, his mind exclusively engaged with the consideration of the mystery of the Trinity, and endeavouring to penetrate its depths, perceived near him a child busily engaged in filling a shell with water from the sea, and emptying it into a hole made in the sand. He thus addressed him : " What do you intend, my child, by pouring the water into that hole ? " " I intend ", was the answer, " to fill it with all the water of the sea ". He laughed at the simplicity of the child. The child, or rather an angel in the form of a child, then said to him : " Do you think that I cannot succeed ? But I tell you that I will have the sea emptied into this hole as soon as you have comprehend the mystery of the Trinity. Can the mind of man, limited as it is, comprehend a God who is infinite ? " This rash man, who was no other than the great St. Augustin, saw at once that it was God who gave him this salutary lesson through the mouth of the child, and he no longer attempted to sound the depths of a mystery which no mortal can comprehend. Yet, though this mystery is incomprehensible to us, it is not contrary to reason ; for we do not say that three Gods are one God, but we say the three Divine Persons are only one God and have the same divine nature ; and there is nothing contrary to reason in that assertion.

10. In addition to the texts we have quoted, in the first part of this lecture, from God's Word, in which the three Divine Persons in one God are clearly pointed out, we will here insert other passages from the Sacred Writings. In the book of Genesis we read : " God said, Let us make man to our image and likeness" (*Gen. i. 26*). Now these words, " God said ", prove the unity of the God-head ; and these other

words, "Let us make man to our image and likeness", point out the plurality of Persons. In the same book we again find God speaking in the plural number: God said, "Lo! Adam is become as one of us, knowing equally good and evil". The Gospel of St. Matthew is clear on this subject: "And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water; and lo! the heavens were opened to Him: and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and coming upon Him. And behold a voice from heaven saying: This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (*Matt.*, iii. 16, 17). Here we find three Persons in God: the Father, who speaks from heaven; the Son, who is baptized; and the Holy Ghost, who descends on Him in the form of a dove. This doctrine of the Trinity has been always the belief of the Church from the time of the Apostles down to our own time. The doxology, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost", can be traced back to the earliest times. This has been the doctrine, too, of seceders from the Church — Greek Schismatics, Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans—all these, equally as ourselves, profess their belief in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Q. Was the mystery of the Holy Trinity known before the coming of Jesus Christ?

A. It was.

11. It is probable that in the Old Law, the patriarchs, the prophets, and many others, distinguished for their science and sanctity, had known the mystery of the Holy Trinity. We must, indeed, believe that they were conversant with the Sacred Writings, and understood their true and exact meaning. But a great many passages in the Old Testament clearly point out a plurality of persons in God, as for example: "Let us make man to our image". "Behold, Adam is become one of us": "The Lord said to my

Lord, sit on my right hand" (*Psal.*, cix. 1): "The Lord said to me: You are my Son, I have begotten you to-day". To the learned and religious members of the Jewish nation, the mystery of the Holy Trinity was not unknown; but the great body of the people had, at the most, but a very obscure idea of that mystery. God so permitted it, because the Jews were prone to idolatry, and were scarcely capable of believing in the existence of three Persons in God, without at the same time believing that there were three Gods.

Q. Are the three Divine Persons three Gods?

A. No; they are only one God, having but one and the same divine nature; and they are from all eternity.

12. "The three Divine Persons", dear children, though distinct from each other, yet "are only one God". And the reason is, because they have "the same divine nature", the divine nature being common to the three Persons. The word *nature* means that which constitutes a being. Human nature, for instance, means the soul of man united to his body, for both constitute a man; the nature of God consists in His infinite perfections. The nature of man is a body united to a soul; and in this respect we are all alike; but each of us has a body and soul different from the body and soul of any one else, and that is the reason that any one of you and I are not the same man, but two men. Now, quite the contrary is the case with the Divine Persons; they have "one and the self-same divine nature", the same divine substance, the same Godhead. Now the divine nature being infinite and immense, cannot, on any account, be more than one, but is the self-same in all the three Divine Persons; it is whole and entire in the Father,

whole and entire in the Son, whole and entire in the Holy Ghost. The divinity of the Father is the self-same as the divinity of the Son, and as the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and, consequently, the three Persons are not three Gods, but one God. This it is which is expressed by the word *consubstantial*, a word signifying unity of substance. And when the Church says that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are *consubstantial*, her meaning is, that the three Persons have the same nature, the same substance, and the self-same divinity, and that each of them possesses it whole and entire.

Q. Is any one of the three Divine Persons more powerful or more wise than the other?

A. No. As the three Divine Persons are all but one and the same God, they must be alike in all divine perfections, therefore one cannot be more powerful or more wise than the other.

13. "The three Divine Persons", as we have just said, dear children, having the self-same divine nature, each of them possessing it whole and entire, must necessarily be equal in all things, and so they are all equally old, equally wise, and equally powerful. "The three Divine Persons" are equally old : the Father is not older than the Son ; and the Father and Son are not older than the Holy Ghost. The Father is from eternity, the Son is from eternity, and the Holy Ghost is from eternity. The first Person is called the Father, not because He is older than the Son, but because from all eternity He begets the Son, who from all eternity is *consubstantial* to Him. The Father could not exist one moment without knowing Himself ; and in knowing Himself He produced the Son, the eternal Word. From all eternity they loved each other with an infinite love, and in thus loving

each other, they produced from all eternity the third Person of the Trinity, who is called the Holy Ghost. Then from all eternity the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father and the Son, and so the Father and the Son cannot be older than the Holy Ghost.

This great truth may be illustrated by the following comparison—an imperfect one, indeed :—Light is the production of the sun, and the sun is the source and principle of light, yet the light is as old as the sun, for the sun cannot exist one moment without shining, and its lustre immediately produces light and heat.

14. “The three Divine Persons” are equally powerful. One can exercise the same power as the other. The Father is all-powerful, the Son is all-powerful, and the Holy Ghost is all-powerful. If the Son or Holy Ghost were less powerful than the Father, neither of them could be God, as being not infinite in everything. The three Divine Persons are equal in every perfection, for, having the same divine nature, the divine perfections are common to the three. If the Father possessed a perfection which the Son or Holy Ghost had not, neither could be God, for either would be wanting in some one perfection.

Q. Although the three Divine Persons are equal in all things, is there not attributed to each of them something peculiar which is not attributed to the other two?

A. Yes.

15. The three Divine Persons are equal in all things ; yet there are some particular operations and perfections attributed to some one of them, though belonging equally to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Thus, omnipotence and the works of omnipotence are attributed to the Father. For this reason it is, that He is called the *Father Almighty*, because the Father being the principle of the other

two Persons, in communicating to them the divine nature, He communicates to them omnipotence with all the other perfections. He is also the principle of all divine operations ; so that omnipotence seems to be peculiarly His, though in reality it belongs equally to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, who, as well as the Father, contribute to all the operations resulting from the divine essence.

Wisdom, and the works of wisdom, are attributed to the Son, because He is the *Word* and the very *Wisdom* of the Father who begets Him from eternity ; so that this perfection seems to be attributed respectively to the Son, though in reality it belongs to the Father and the Holy Ghost, equally as to Him.

The operations of grace and the works of mercy are attributed to the Holy Ghost, because He proceeds from the Father and Son by the eternal love which they bear each other, and which love is called in sacred writings the *goodness* and *charity* of God ; so that these operations and these works appear to belong respectively to the Holy Ghost, though, in strict truth, they belong to the Father and the Son, equally as to the Holy Ghost.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

DEATH OF ARIUS, WHO DENIED THE DIVINITY OF THE SON.

* Constantine the Great directed an order to Alexander, the first Bishop of Constantinople, that Arius should be received into the communion of the Church. Alexander had nothing but his prayers to offer against the violence that was offered to him. In sore affliction, he most earnestly prayed that God, by some visible effect of His power, would either prevent the daring insult in agitation against His divine Son, or take him out of life not to behold it. Prostrate before the altar, he thus prayed the whole night. In the morning, at the appointed hour, the Eusebians, with great parade,

led forth their hero, Arius, in procession towards the church. As he went along, boasting of his re-establishment, through the city, the vengeance of God overtook him in the Great Square. He got a terrible spasm in his bowels, and was obliged to seek a place of retirement ; a private place near the Square was pointed out to him ; he immediately burst open like Judas ; his intestines, his spleen and his liver, all fell out ; and thus his guilty soul took her flight to her Creator, deprived of the communion of the Church. When he had delayed too long, his friends came to the door, and on opening it they found him stretched on the floor in a pool of blood. This event took place in the year 336 (*St. Liguori*).

MACEDONIUS, THE IMPUGNER OF THE DIVINITY OF THE HOLY GHOST.

† The induction of Macedonius into the metropolitan see of Constantinople was attended by some horrible and revolting circumstances. He went to take possession in a splendid chariot, accompanied by his clergy, but with the imperial prefect by his side and surrounded by a powerful body of armed troops to strike terror into the people. An immense multitude was assembled, out of curiosity, to see the pageant, and the throng was so great that the church, streets, and squares were all choked up, and the new bishop could not proceed. The soldiers set about clearing the way ; they first struck the people with the shafts of their spears, and whether it was by the orders of the bishop, or through their own ferocity, they soon began to wound and kill the people, and trample on the slain and fallen. The consequence was, that three thousand one hundred and fifty dead bodies lay stretched in gore in the street. The bishop passed through, and as his entrance to the episcopal throne was marked by blood and slaughter, so his future government of the see was distinguished for vengeance and cruelty. In the first place, he began to persecute the friends of Paul, his competitor in the see. He caused some of them to be publicly flogged, and confiscated the property of others. More he banished, and of one in particular he marked his hatred, by causing him to be branded on the forehead, to stamp him through life as a mark of infamy. His rage was not alone directed against the friends of Paul, but against all who professed the faith of the Council of Nice. The wretch made use of atrocious torments to oblige them to receive communion at his hands. He used, as Socrates informs us, to have their mouths forced open with a wooden tongs, and the consecrated particle forced on them.

He treated mothers and children in the most cruel manner. The mothers he tortured by squeezing their breasts under the lid of a heavy chest, and caused them to be cut off with a sharp razor, or burned with red coals or red-hot balls, and then left to die in prolonged torture (*St. Liguori*).

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What do you mean by the word person ?
2. Has the word person, when applied to God, the same significance as when applied to man ?
3. How do you prove from Scripture that there are three distinct Persons in one God ?
4. Why is the third Person called the Holy Ghost ?
5. Is the divine nature whole and entire in each of the three Persons ?
6. How do you show that the Son is God ?
7. How do you prove that the Holy Ghost is God ?
8. Can we understand how three distinct Persons exist in one God ?
9. Relate the circumstance that occurred to St. Augustin.
10. Prove the doctrine of the Trinity from Scripture. Has that doctrine been always the belief of the Church ?
11. Had the Jews a knowledge of the Trinity ?
12. Have the three Divine Persons three distinct natures ?
13. Are the three Divine Persons equally wise and equally old ?
14. Are the three Divine Persons equally powerful ?
15. Is there anything attributed to any one of the three Divine Persons which is not attributed to all three ?

PRACTICE.

1. Have a firm belief in, and often honour and invoke the adorable Trinity.
2. During life, and particularly at the hour of death, have unlimited confidence in the adorable Trinity.
3. Always recollect that to believe in the Trinity is the greatest sacrifice of our reason ; to dive into that mystery the greatest rashness ; to behold the Trinity our sovereign happiness.

PRAYER.

Glory, honour, and praise be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, for the instruction which we have

just received. We have been taught, O my God! that Thou art one in three distinct Persons, and that the three Persons are equal in all things, as they have but one and the same divine nature. Have I practically believed this adorable mystery hitherto? Have I honoured and revered the holy Trinity as I should? Pardon me, O Lord! if hitherto I have been wanting in due honour and respect to that adorable name. I now firmly believe in this mystery, incomprehensible though it be; for you, O Supreme Truth! have declared it, and for me that is enough. I will believe it firmly through life, and at the hour of my death my last words shall be: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. Amen.

CHAPTER X.

ON THE INCARNATION.

Q. Did one of the three Divine Persons become man?

A. Yes; God the Son, the second Divine Person, became man (*John*, i. 14).

1. The Redeemer given us by God, dear children, is no other than His Son—His only Son—His Word, who, that He might suffer and die for us, was made man, became like unto us, clothed with all our infirmities, excepting sin, ignorance, and an inclination to evil. To deliver us from sin and the power of the devil, God selected not a mere man, for a man could not effect our ransom. Even an angel could not become our redeemer, for the outrage offered to God by sin being infinite, infinite satisfaction for sin was required; and that infinite satisfaction the highest angel in heaven could not pay, for, though a glorious and a resplendent inhabitant of that kingdom, he is still but a creature. It was then ne-

cessary that God should become man, to save us from hell ; and God the Son did become man, to rescue us from the slavery of the devil. Oh, what a mystery of love ! Rebellious though we were, “ God so loved us as to give His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting ” (*John*, iii. 16). God the Son become man to redeem us ! Ah ! should we allow a single day to pass without thanking this amiable Saviour for His great love towards us ?

Q. How did God the Son become man ?

A. He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.

2. God the Son, as *God*, had no mother, because the Father begot Him from all eternity ; so, too, as *man*, He had no father, for His body was formed miraculously, in the chaste womb of the Blessed Virgin, “ by the Holy Ghost ”. The Blessed Virgin, although married to St. Joseph, yet remained a pure virgin. The conception of Jesus Christ was effected in a manner quite different from the way in which we have been conceived. In the conception of Jesus Christ there was nothing impure, nothing carnal. The Holy Ghost Himself formed from the pure blood of Mary the body of Jesus Christ, in her virginal womb. Although this miracle was performed by the operation of the three Divine Persons, still it is attributed to the Holy Ghost only, because it was the effect of God’s *ineffable love* to us that the Son became man. Now, we attribute the effects of love to the Holy Ghost, as we attribute the effects of power to the Father, and of wisdom to the Son.

Q. What do you mean by saying that the Son of God *was conceived by the Holy Ghost* ?

A. I mean that He assumed human nature, that is, a body and soul like ours, by *the power and operation of the Holy Ghost*.

3. The Son of God—the eternal word—begotten by the Father from all eternity, took “a body and soul like ours”. He took not only “a body” but also a soul, because He came to save man, composed of a body and soul. The “body” taken by Him was a real body, true flesh like ours, formed from the pure blood of a virgin, and not a *fantastical* body, as some heretics asserted. That His body was a *real* body, and not one *in appearance* merely, He Himself declares in those words addressed to His Apostles, after His resurrection : “See My hands and feet, that it is I Myself ; handle and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as you see Me to have” (*Luke*, xxv. 39). The body assumed by Him was, like ours, subject to infirmity, to hunger, to thirst, to weariness, and to all the miseries of human nature except sin.

4. He took also a thinking and reasonable soul—a soul like ours, subject to grief, and pain, and sorrow. Without a soul He could not be man, for man is composed of a body and soul united. It was of this He spoke, when, in His dreadful agony in the garden of Gethsemane, He said to His apostles : “My soul is sorrowful even unto death”. Jesus Christ, then, has taken everything of man’s nature, excepting sin and ignorance, which He has not taken nor could take. This wonderful formation of the body and soul of Jesus Christ was effected, as we have said before, “by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost”. It was thus that the Son of God became man and *dwelt amongst us*, without ceasing to be God, dwelling in the highest heavens with His Father. Oh, dear children, could we but understand how great God is—could we comprehend His glory, power, and

majesty—we would burn with love at the thought that the Son of God became man on account of His great love for us !

Q. Where did God the Son take a body and soul like ours ?

A. In the chaste womb of the Virgin Mary, and *He was born man of her.*

5. Yes, dear children, it was in the Blessed Virgin's pure womb, that the Son of God took "a body and soul" like our body and soul. The Holy Ghost having created a most perfect soul, and having formed a body of the pure and immaculate blood of the ever blessed Mary ; the Son of God, the Second Person of the blessed Trinity, united Himself at once to that body and to that soul by so close a tie that death itself could not sever, but which should continue during all eternity. What a depth of humility is here ! The Son of God, though still residing in the highest heavens in all His glory and majesty, descends in the womb of a virgin, and *was made man of her !* In the womb of a virgin ! Oh, what a dwelling, no matter how pure a virgin may be, for a God whom heaven and earth cannot contain ! Never can we comprehend the great love which Jesus Christ has shown us in the mystery of His incarnation.

Q. Who was the Blessed Virgin Mary ?

A. Mary was a virgin of the tribe of Juda, and of the family of David.

6. Mary, the Mother of our Blessed Saviour, was descended from a holy king called David. She had a pious father and mother, named St. Joachim and St. Anne, who for some years had no children ; and that to Jewish parents was a source of sorrow and grief,

for they all used to hope they might be the parents of the Saviour. The grief of St. Joachim and St. Anne was at last over, for God rewarded their patience and love of Him by sending them a beautiful child. This child was conceived without sin; that is, she was never, as other little children are at their birth, in a state of original sin and therefore had no inclination, like others, to do evil actions through the weakness of her nature. St. Anne brought her up very devoutly; and too, she was so filled with the grace of God, that she could not commit the slightest sin. During her early years she took great delight in praying to God and doing His holy will. As she was to become the mother of His Son, God filled her soul with His choicest gifts, and there never was before or since a creature so lovely and pure.

7. When very young, Mary was presented as a consecrated virgin to God in the holy Temple of Jerusalem.* As she entered the Temple, it is said that sweet heavenly music was heard, and that the guardian angels of the Temple surrounded her, and covered her little form with their white wings, strewing under her feet fragrant flowers from Paradise. She remained in the Temple until she was fifteen years of age, as we are told by pious writers. As all the saints, and all those whom God loves most, have many trials and sorrows in this world, sent them by God, in order to make them more holy; and as Our Lady was loved more than any of the saints, by God, so she had more sorrows and grief than any one else had. She had severe trials to undergo at every period of her life. She was deprived of her father, St. Joachim, when she had been nine years in the Temple.

* Orsini's Life of the Virgin, translated by the Rev. Patrick Power.

8. When the time of mourning was over, the Blessed Virgin, by God's command, espoused St. Joseph, and went with him to live at Nazareth. St. Joseph was a carpenter, and at that time worked at his trade, making ploughshares, rustic chairs, and other domestic utensils ; and sometimes he cut down the dark firs and the sycamore trees of Mount Carmel, a mountain near Nazareth.* Mary attended to her household affairs, and got ready the meals for St. Joseph and herself. Though engaged at her domestic works, she did not give up praying, but continued in that holy exercise which she had been used to perform in the holy Temple, and had her heart always turned towards God. How she was rewarded by God, and how she became the Mother of His Son, we shall tell in another chapter.

Q. Why is the Blessed Mother of God called a virgin ?

A. Because she conceived and brought forth the Son of God, and yet remained a virgin.

9. The ever Blessed Mother of Jesus Christ, the Man-God, was always a virgin. Before she conceived and brought forth the Son of God, she had been a virgin ; and when she brought Him forth, and after she brought Him forth, she remained a virgin. As we told you before, dear children, the Blessed Virgin conceived in a most wonderful, miraculous way ; so, too, she brought forth the Son of God in a most wonderful, miraculous way. The prophet *Isaias* tells us that a virgin shall not only conceive, but shall bring forth a Son. Mary was as a tomb hewn in a rock, in which Jesus Christ reposed, and in which no person before or after was laid. As Faith teaches us, dear children, that Mary, the Mother

* Orsini's Life of the Blessed Virgin, translated by Rev. Patrick Power.

of the Man-God, always remained a virgin, we must believe that St. Joseph, the spouse of Mary, was not the father of Jesus Christ. As Jesus Christ was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, He could have no father among men. St. Joseph can be considered only in the light of a foster-father to Jesus Christ, and as the guardian of Mary's virginity.

Q. How do you call God the Son made man ?

A. Jesus Christ ?

10. Yes, the Son of God made Man is called "Jesus Christ"; so whenever you hear the name of Jesus Christ mentioned, in church or at home, do not forget that it is the Son of God who is meant; and at the same time think on the great love which God had for us, when He took our human nature, and became like us poor sinners, for the purpose of redeeming us from the devil and from sin. Jesus Christ as *God* existed from all eternity, for He never had a beginning; but Jesus Christ as *Man* had a beginning. And that beginning was the very moment that He was conceived in the bosom of the Blessed Virgin, that is, about 1877 years ago; for our years are counted from the birth of Jesus Christ. Again, Jesus Christ as *God* is everywhere, in heaven and on earth; but Jesus Christ as *Man* is only in heaven, and in the Blessed Sacrament of the altar.

Q. What is the meaning of these words *Jesus Christ* ?

A. *Jesus* signifies Saviour, and *Christ* signifies the Anointed; and St. Paul says that, "in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow" (*Phil.*, xi. 10).

11. The name which has been given to the Son of

God made Man to redeem us, is composed of two words, *Jesus* and *Christ*. The word *Jesus* means *Saviour*. This was the name that the Angel Gabriel told the Virgin that her Son should be called—"And thou shalt call His name Jesus" (*St. Luke*). This name was again given to Him at His circumcision. Not without reason is our Lord entitled to this name, for He has saved us from the slavery of the devil and from the punishments of hell. The Son of God made Man is, too, called our Redeemer, that we might know that He has shed His blood, and laid down His life, to redeem us from the slavery of sin under which we for so many years groaned. *Redeemer* means a person who redeems or ransoms a captive or prisoner; that is, one who pays a sum of money to restore a prisoner to liberty. Now, dear children, we all were captives of the devil, until the Son of God ransomed us and restored us to liberty; and the ransom that He paid was not money, but His own precious blood, which He poured out to the last drop on the cross.

12. To the word *Jesus* is added that of *Christ*, which means "the anointed" or sacred. And why is the name *Christ* added to *Jesus*? In the old law, kings, priests, and prophets were *anointed*, that is, had oil poured on their heads. That anointing pointed out that they belonged to God. In the new law also, when bishops and priests are receiving holy orders, they are *anointed* as a mark that they are consecrated to the Lord; so, too, are kings. The name *Christ*, which means one who is consecrated or *anointed*, is given to the Son of God made Man, because He is at the same time king, priest, and prophet. He is King; His father gave Him all power over men; He reigns over all nations, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. He is Priest—that is, one who offers sacrifice. But the Son of

God has offered up, and offers up every day, the greatest and holiest of all sacrifices—the Mass. He is a Prophet, for He sees everything to come; nothing can be concealed from Him. He foretold everything about His passion and death. It is He Himself who spoke by the prophets.*

13. The Man-God—king, priest, and prophet at the same time—has not been consecrated outwardly by material or sensible oil. God the Father has not made use of the outward ceremony of pouring oil on the head of His Son. The *anointing* which He has received is that of the union of His divinity to His soul and body; and so united, the soul and body have become the soul and body of God. On this account it is that He is called *Jesus Christ*, a name which is expressive of all the qualities of our adorable Saviour: A name which is above all names: in which every knee should bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth (*Philip.*, ii. 9, 10). And, dear children, do you not see that all those persons who have faith, and respect for this holy name, bow down and uncover their heads when it is pronounced? Let you, too, do the same, and take care that those outward marks of respect be always accompanied by interior sentiments of love and gratitude towards Him who bears it for the love of you.

Q. Did Jesus Christ remain God when He became Man?

A. Yes; He was always God.

14. Yes; the Son of God became man, without ceasing to be God. As “He was always God”, He necessarily should be so at the time He was made man. As a prince, who, in order to console those confined in a prison, descends from his throne, puts on the clothes of the poorest of his subjects, yet pre-

serves under these ragged garments all his dignity and regal power ; so, too, the Son of God, in becoming man by assuming our nature, ceased not to be God, but remained the same God that He had always been.

Q. Was Jesus Christ always Man ?

A. No ; only from the time of His Conception or Incarnation.

15. Jesus Christ dear children, though God from all eternity, was not man from all eternity, nor was He man two thousand years ago. He was not man until the time He was *conceived* or became *incarnate*, and that time goes not farther back than about eighteen hundred and seventy-seven years. As you were told before, our years are counted from the time that Jesus Christ was born, and that time was only nine months after "His conception", or when He became man.

Q. Is the Blessed Virgin truly the Mother of God ?

A. Yes ; for she conceived and brought forth Jesus Christ, who is true God.

16. Though the Blessed Virgin is not mother of the *divinity* of Jesus Christ, she is, however, Mother of God, because she conceived and brought forth Jesus Christ, in whom the divine and human nature are so united as to form but one Person. So that Mary is entitled to the name of the Mother of the Creator of heaven and earth, because she conceived and brought forth in time Him whom the Father begot from all eternity. There are not, then, two Sons, one proceeding from all eternity from the bosom of His Father, and the other conceived in time in the womb of Mary ; but one sole Jesus Christ, God and Man, the eternal Son of God, and at the same time

the Son of the Virgin Mary. Those, dear children, who have brought us into this world, have as little reason to be called mothers of our souls, as Mary has to be called mother of the *divinity*; still we call them, and justly so, our mothers. In the fifth century, Nestorius, patriarch of Constantinople, maintained that there were two persons in Jesus Christ; that the Blessed Virgin was not the mother of God, as the Son she brought forth was not a *divine* but a *human* person. This attempt to deprive Mary of her glorious title alarmed the entire Catholic Church. A Council was summoned at Ephesus to consider this strange and hitherto unheard-of doctrine.†

17. The day on which the Council was to pronounce its definite sentence on the divine maternity of Mary, the people, disquieted and agitated, thronged the streets and surrounded the gorgeous temple, erected under the invocation of the Blessed Virgin, by the piety of those living along the coast of the Icarian Sea. Here it was, that two hundred bishops examined the propositions of Nestorius, who, placing so little reliance on the justice of his cause and the strength of his arguments, had not the courage to appear in his defence. The multitudinous assembly, wedged close together outside the porch of the church and in the contiguous streets, observed a profound, deep silence; anxiety was depicted on the everchanging countenance of those Greeks, whose beautiful and expressive features faithfully pourtrayed the different feelings of their souls. A bishop appears; he announces to the sad and silent multitude, that the Council had launched an anathema against the innovator, and that the ever-blessed Virgin had been gloriously confirmed in her august prerogative. Then transports of delight burst forth on every side. The Ephesians and the strangers there assembled from the different towns of Asia

thronged around the fathers of the Council ; they kiss their hands, they kiss their garments, and in the streets through which they were to pass they burn sweet-scented perfumes. The city is illuminated, and joy, pure and universal, is everywhere felt. It is believed that it was in the Council of Ephesus that St. Cyril, in concert with the fathers over whom he presided, composed that sweet and touching prayer to the Mother of God, since then adopted by the Church : " Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us, sinners, now and at the hour of our death". Amen.*

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE DEATH OF NESTORIUS.

*Nestorius was born in Germanica, a town in Syria, and was brought up in the monastery of St. Euprepius, situated in the suburbs of Antioch. He was afterwards ordained priest, and had the character of an eloquent preacher. Whilst preaching one day in the church of Constantinople, and denying the two generations of Christ, the eternal and the temporal, a person in the church boldly stood forward and said to him : "It is true, nevertheless ; it is the same Word, who before all ages was born of the Father, and was afterwards born anew of a virgin, according to the flesh". Nestorius, irritated at the interruption, called the speaker a miserable, ribald wretch ; and as he could not be avenged of him, being a representative of his sovereign, he discharged his rage on some good monks, who came to inquire of him whether what was said of his teaching was true. Nestorius confined them in the ecclesiastical prison, and his myrmidons, after having stripped them of their habits, and kicked and beaten them, tied them to a post, and lacerated their backs with the greatest cruelty ; then stretching them on the ground, they struck them on the chest and stomach. After

* Orsini's History of the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin, translated by the Rev. P. Power.

his condemnation by the Church, the Emperor Theodosius ordered him to enter his old monastery of Euprepious, and there learn to repent. But instead of manifesting sorrow for his past conduct, he there endeavoured to infect the monks of the monastery with his heretical opinions. He was then banished to the oasis between Egypt and Lybia, and soon after, as Fleury relates, was transferred to Panapolis, and from Panapolis to Elephantina, where at last he died in misery, worn out by years and infirmities. Some say that, through desperation, he dashed his brains out ; others, that the ground opened under him and swallowed him alive ; more, that he died of a cancer, which rotted his tongue, until it was eaten by the worms engendered by the disease—a fit punishment for that tongue, which had uttered so many blasphemies against Jesus Christ and His Holy Mother.—*St. Liguori.*

ST. POLYCARP BEFORE THE ROMAN PROCONSUL.

† When St. Polycarp, Bishop of Symrna, was brought before the Roman proconsul, then sitting in judgment amidst a crowded audience, to answer for his belief in Jesus Christ, a voice, distinctly heard by many, suddenly issued from above, saying : “ Polycarp, be courageous and act manfully ”. The proconsul began by exhorting him to respect his own grey hairs, to swear by the genius of Cæsar, and to say—“ Exterminate the impious ”, meaning the Christians. The saint was silent. “ Swear by the genius of Cæsar ”, said the proconsul again ; “ blaspheme Christ, and I discharge thee ”. Polycarp replied : “ I have served Christ these fourscore and ten years, and how can I now blaspheme Him ? From Him I have received much good, and never any harm. I cannot blaspheme my King and my Saviour. You command me to swear by the genius of Cæsar, as you call it. I am a Christian. We, Christians, are taught to pay due honour to our temporal sovereigns, as far as is consistent with religion—no farther ”. “ I have wild beasts at my call ”, replied the proconsul, in a threatening tone. “ Let them come at your call ”, replied the saint, “ my resolution is fixed and not to be shaken ”. “ If you scorn the beasts ”, subjoined the proconsul, “ I will sentence you to be burned to ashes ”. Polycarp answered : “ The fire you threaten me with burns for a short time only, and then goes out. There is another fire kindled for the punishment of evil, and it burns for ever. Bring against me what you will, I am ready—why do you delay ? ” While he thus spoke, his countenance seemed to shine with a kind of heavenly cheerfulness, which struck

the beholders, and even the proconsul himself. The crowd then shouted with triumph, and as with one voice demanded that the father of the Christians and the destroyer of their gods should be burned alive. This request was granted. The intrepid martyr, with his hands tied behind him, was placed at the stake; heaps of wood were piled up around him. There standing, and fixing his eyes on heaven, he uttered a most fervent prayer to God. Scarce had he said the word Amen, when the impatient mob set fire to the pile. The fire quickly increased to a rapid flame. But behold, as eye-witnesses of the fact relate, the flames rose in the form of an arch, gently encircling the body of the martyr, which appeared not like roasted flesh, but like purified gold brightly shining through the flames, and sending forth a sweet odour, equal to the most fragrant spices.—*Eusebius.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Why did not God select a man, or even an angel, to redeem us?
2. Had God the Son, as man, a father? By which of the three Divine Persons was He conceived?
3. Did God the Son take a real body like ours? How do you prove it?
4. Was the soul of Jesus Christ subject to pain, grief, and sorrow like ours?
5. Where did Jesus Christ unite His Divine Person to a body and soul like ours?
6. Can you tell who the Blessed Virgin was, and how she spent her early years?
7. Did any particular circumstances occur when Mary entered the Temple of Jerusalem?
8. To whom was the Blessed Virgin married? What were their occupations?
9. Was Mary a Virgin when she conceived and brought forth Jesus Christ?
10. Had Jesus Christ, as God, a beginning? Had He, as man, and at what time?
11. Why is Jesus Christ called Saviour? What means the word Redeemer?
12. Is Jesus Christ king, priest, and prophet at the same time?
13. Had Jesus Christ been consecrated outwardly with oil?
14. When Jesus Christ became man, did He cease to be God?

15. How long ago is it since Jesus Christ became man ?
16. As the Virgin is not mother of the divinity of Jesus Christ, how can she be called the Mother of God ?
17. Relate the circumstances connected with the decree of the Council of Ephesus.

PRACTICE.

1. Often think of the great love of Jesus for you in becoming man.
2. Every time you hear the *Angelus* bell, excite your faith in this divine mystery, and recite devoutly the "Angel of the Lord".
3. Propose Jesus Christ to yourself as a model, and firmly resolve not to do or say anything that may be displeasing to Him.

PRAYER.

Yes, divine Saviour made man for us ! we choose you today as our model, for you have become man not only to die for us, but also to show us the way to heaven by your example. Pardon us, dear God, for our past forgetfulness of thy benefits, and particularly of that of the incarnation ; henceforward we shall often think of thy goodness and love. O Holy Virgin, in whose sacred womb God the Son became man, we this day implore thy intercession ; we salute thee in the words of the angel, "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women".

C H A P T E R X I.

THE INCARNATION.

Q. What means the Incarnation ?

A. That God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, *was made man*.

1. The word *incarnation* means made flesh, or as the answer in the Catechism has it, "*made man*". St. John says : "The Word was made flesh", that is, the

Word, or the Son of God, took our nature—a soul and a body like ours—and became man without ceasing to be God. The divine and human nature are so closely and intimately united as to form only one Person, which is the Son of God; something like the union of the soul and body, which are so united that they form only *one man*. What a mystery of love! for it is to the love which God had for us that we owe the incarnation of His Son: “God so loved the world”, says the apostle, “that He gave His only Son to redeem and save it”. What a glorious mystery for human nature! to what a height of glory and honour has not our nature been raised by the accomplishment of this ineffable mystery. It has obtained a privilege never granted to the angelical nature, for to our nature, and not to the angelical nature, has the Person of the Son of God united Himself. Justly is it called a *mystery*, for we cannot comprehend how a God could so love us as to become man to save us; nor can we comprehend how the divine nature is united to the human nature in the Person of Jesus Christ. Yet, it is so; and we must believe it, or else lose our souls.*

Q. What do you believe Jesus Christ to be?

A. True God and true man.

2. The Son of God, since His incarnation, is both God and man, and will for ever be God and man. “In the beginning was the Word”, says St. John, “and the Word was with God, and the Word was God, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us”. We find the same truth clearly expressed in many other passages of the Gospel, in which the Son of God declares Himself to be equal to His Father. He is also “true Man”, and will be man for ever, as He has a soul and body like ours; for when the fulness

of time was come, He became man by taking our nature, and uniting it to His own divine nature in His own Person. He Himself declares He is a true man, capable of feeling sorrow and grief, and of being put to death : “ My soul is *sorrowful even unto death*”, He says in the Gospel of St. Matthew ; and again, in the Gospel of St. John, His words to the Jews are : “ You seek to kill me, a *man* who have spoken the truth to you” (*John*, viii. 40).

Q. Are there two natures in Christ :

A. Yes ; in God the Son made man, there are two natures, the divine and human.

3. Jesus Christ has two natures, the nature of God and the nature of man united in one Person—the Person of the Son of God : for if, as you have been already told, dear children, Christ is both true God and true Man, He must have both the nature of God and the nature of man. Being true God, He must of necessity have the nature of God, and being true Man, He must of necessity have the nature of man, since the being anything, and having the nature of that thing, is one and the self same.

The divine nature and the human nature are united in the Person of Jesus Christ, without confusion ; they are quite distinct one from the other, and so united as to form only one Person, the Son of God. From this difference of natures, it will be easy to reconcile His words, when in one place He says : “ I and the Father are one”; and in another place : “ the Father is greater than I”. In the first passage He speaks of His divine nature, and in the second, of His human nature. It was in virtue of His divine nature that He performed miracles, gave sight to the blind, raised the dead to life ; that He declared Himself eternal, equal to His Father. On account of His

human nature it was that He was hungry and thirsty, that He suffered and died.

4. An Eutychian* wishing to convince a child that there is only one nature in Jesus Christ, took up two pieces of iron, and after reddening them in the fire, united them so as to make but one piece. In this way it is, said he, that the divine and human nature, united in Jesus Christ, make but one nature in His Person. But, replied the child, if, instead of taking two pieces of iron, you take only one piece, and then join it to a piece of gold, you will find that, though closely united and forming but one piece, the gold will continue gold, and the iron will remain iron. So it is, concludes the child, that the divine and human nature, though quite distinct one from the other, form but one Person in Jesus Christ. As there are two natures in Jesus Christ, so there are also two wills, the divine will and the human will ; but the two wills of Christ are subordinate one to the other : the human will is always subject to the divine will. When in the garden of Olives, He said : " My Father, if it be possible let this chalice pass from Me", He speaks according to the human will ; but He immediately subjects it to the divine will, for He adds : " Not My will but Thine be done".

Q. Are there two Persons in Christ ?

A. No ; there is only one Person in Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

5. Though the Son of God, from the time He became man, has two natures and two wills, yet there is in Him only one Person—the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity—because His human nature has no peculiar personality. Since, then, there is only one Person in Jesus Christ, we can attribute to God,

* One who admits only one nature in Christ.

in Jesus Christ, what can only agree properly to man, and we can attribute to Man in Jesus Christ what can only properly belong to God, because the same Person has both natures, being both God and Man. Thus it is true that God has suffered, has died, has risen from the dead ; and so it is true that man is the Son of God, that He is God. We cannot, however, say of the Father and Holy Ghost, that they became incarnate, suffered, or died, as having the same nature with the Son ; because to the Person of the Son alone is human nature united. He alone, and not the Father or the Holy Ghost, became man. What has been just said, dear children, is, I allow, somewhat abstruse ; but as an accurate knowledge of the Incarnation is very necessary, I thought it well that the matter should be fully explained to you, that you may not fall into error when speaking of the Incarnation.†

Q. Why did Christ become Man?

A. To redeem and save us.

6. Yes, dear children, it was to redeem us from the slavery of Satan that Jesus Christ became man. To redeem is, properly speaking, to buy anything again, which was before one's own, but had gone from him to another's possession. To redeem, when applied to men, means to buy those out of slavery, who had been free before. Now, God, in the beginning, created man in a state of freedom ; and man then served God with a willing obedience, and out of love, as a son serves a father. But soon after he sinned, and by sin withdrew himself from the sweet service of God, and became the servant of Satan. Nor did the miserable slavery of man end with his life ; for as by sin he had outraged God, and became an object of His vengeance, he was condemned by God's justice

to suffer the eternal punishments of hell in the next life. It was to redeem us from this wretched and never-ending slavery that Jesus Christ became Man.

Q. How did Christ redeem and save us?

A. By His sufferings and death on the Cross.

7. Yes, dear children, it was by a life of suffering, and by a painful and fearful death on a cross, that Christ redeemed us from Satan, and saved us from hell. During His life He was often hungry and thirsty, and endured sorrow and grief. The comforts of this world He had not. He Himself tells us that He "had not even a place whereon to lay His head". And during the closing days of His life, He was treated as the vilest criminal; He was spat upon; He was made a subject of mockery; His head was crowned with thorns; His tender flesh was scourged with rods; His eyes were blindfolded; He was treated as a buffoon; and after enduring all these sufferings in order to redeem and save us, He allowed Himself to be stript of His clothes, and thus naked to be nailed to a cross. On that cross He hung for three hours, and then died. Oh! what love we should have for Jesus Christ, who suffered so much to redeem and save us! True, He could "redeem and save us" without undergoing all these sufferings. The smallest action or suffering of His, as it was of infinite value, could redeem ten thousand worlds. But the will of the Almighty was such, that He should suffer all these torments, and shed the last drop of His blood, that by this means He might the more efficaciously show the greatness of His love for us, and so might the more effectually encourage and excite us to love Him, and place every confidence in His infinite goodness. O sweet Jesus, may we never cease to love Thee and repose our trust in Thee!

Q. Was it by His passion and death also, Christ satisfied the justice of God for our sins ?

A. Yes ; and delivered us from hell and the power of the devil.

8. To satisfy for an offence committed against another, is to offer to the person who received the offence some gift or service which is equal or more agreeable to him than the offence was disagreeable. Strict justice requires that the satisfaction be equal to the offence ; and if the satisfaction be more than is required, it is superabundant. Now what Jesus Christ did and suffered, was of infinite value in the eyes of His Father, and therefore infinitely agreeable to Him ; and as the Divine Justice required only that the sins of men should be satisfied, the satisfaction of His divine Son not only was equal to the offence, but was more than the offence required. It fully appeased the wrath of God against man, made Him willing to be reconciled with him, and to forgive the offence received by his sins. St. Paul tells us that the God of justice being satisfied by the sufferings of Christ, “blotted out the handwriting of the decree that was against us, and hath taken the same out of the way, fastening it to the cross” (*Colos.*, ii. 14).

9. Not only did Christ, by His sufferings and death, satisfy the justice of God, but He also “delivered us from hell and from the power of the devil”. Sin is the source of our slavery to the devil ; for sin alone it is, that makes us slaves of the devil and condemns us to hell. As we have been delivered from sin, we are, of course, delivered from “the power of the devil”. The Scriptures speak of our delivery from sin as the greatest benefit that we have received, and Christ is styled our Redeemer and Saviour chiefly on that account. Thus the Angel Gabriel declared to

St. Joseph before Christ was born : "Thou shalt call His name JESUS (or Saviour), for He shall save His people from their sins" (*Matt.*, i. 21). And by delivering us from our sins, He consequently "delivered us from the power of the devil" and from the tyranny of that cruel master of hell. Oh ! how we should unceasingly give thanks to God for redeeming us from hell, and for wresting us from the slavery of Satan ! Ah ! what little value have we set on our redemption, who every day by our sins insult and blaspheme the Author of our redemption !

Q. As Jesus Christ has done so much for the salvation of mankind, will all men be saved ?

A. No ; all men will not be saved, but the greater number will be damned.

10. Yes, dear children, the number of those who will be damned is much greater than of those who will be saved, and what a fearful thought is that ! But their damnation is to be attributed to themselves alone. As we observed in a previous chapter, God, in creating man, endowed him with free will ; and as He bestowed on him a free soul, He required from him a free and voluntary service. But if man, by abusing his free will, rebels against God, he forfeits all the favours bestowed on him by God in this life, and also forfeits his title to that eternal reward which had been prepared for him in the life to come. Now, though Jesus Christ, by His sufferings and death, fully satisfied the divine justice for the offences committed against God, reconciled God with us, and moreover obtained grace to enable us to do on our part what should be required of us to complete our reconciliation ; yet it is quite clear, that if we still continue in rebellion against God, refuse to return to His service, and to perform the conditions which He requires on our part, for being received again into

His favour, the fruits of Christ's merits cannot be applied to our souls ; and as they cannot, we are deprived of all God's favours, and incur eternal damnation. It was by abusing our free will that we lost His favour, and we never can recover that favour without *willingly* performing what He requires to gain it.

11. Though Christ suffered and died for all, and procured many benefits for all, yet He will not force any one to accept of these benefits against his will. All He did for us will not be of the least service to us, except the fruits of His merits be applied to our souls ; but the fruits of His merits will never be applied to our souls—we never can enter heaven, unless we willingly perform the conditions which He requires, and use all the means which He has appointed for that purpose. Hence St. Paul tells us that Christ “became the cause of eternal salvation to all that obey Him” (*Heb.*, v. 9). Now, as God wills all to be saved, and as Jesus Christ died for all, God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, gives to all men all the helps of grace necessary to enable them to perform the conditions which He requires to secure their salvation. But, alas ! the greater number, still continuing to abuse their free will, refuse to co-operate with that grace ; and as they do not perform the conditions required, they are therefore lost for ever !

Q. Has Jesus Christ been the Saviour of all who lived before His coming upon earth ?

A. Yes ; for all the favours conferred on them by God, were granted in consideration of the merits of Jesus Christ.

12. It was, dear children, on condition that Jesus Christ should come to satisfy the justice of heaven, outraged by sin, that God granted His favours to all who lived before our Lord's coming on earth. You

will better understand this by a familiar illustration. We will suppose you were taken and carried off by a horde of barbarians into a wild and savage country, and there reduced to a state of vile slavery, from which you could not be set free except on condition of paying a large sum of money, which it was out of your power to do. A very rich man takes compassion on you and pays your ransom, on the implied condition that your father, at some future time, will pay him back the sum. A great many years after, your father fulfils the condition of your ransom. Is he not then your deliverer? Will he be not always then your redeemer, your saviour? In like manner, Jesus Christ has been the Saviour of all those who lived, even of those who were damned, before His coming upon earth, because they had received graces from God by which they could save themselves, and because these graces were granted them only in view of the future merits of Jesus Christ.†

Q. Does the figure of the cross point out that Jesus Christ died for all men?

A. Yes.

13. The figure of the cross, says a Protestant writer,* formed by the intersection of two straight lines, cutting each other at right angles, extends to infinity, and signifies, under its simple formation, the universality of things. And this is the reason why, as learned persons tell us, Christ wished to die, with His hands and feet extended on a cross. He wished to enclose in His embrace the whole world, and show us that He died to redeem the whole world.

Q. Was it as Man or as God that Jesus Christ died?

A. As God, Jesus Christ could not die; He died as Man, that is, His soul was separated from His body.

* Adalbert Daniel.

14. Jesus Christ, who died for us on a cross, being a Divine Person, and the sufferings which during life He underwent, being His sufferings, it follows, then, that God suffered and died for us. But Jesus Christ *as God* did not die for us, for the divine nature—the divinity—could not suffer or die. He died as Man, that is, that at the very moment He expired on the cross, His soul was really separated from His body—the divinity, however, remaining united to His soul and to His body, even after their separation. As His soul, when leaving His body, remained always inseparably united to the Divinity, so also, His lifeless body, whilst hanging on the cross, and when taking down from the cross, and during the time that it was in the sepulchre, was never without, but always united to the Divinity, and so could never be subject to corruption.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

DEATH OF CERINTHUS THE HERESIARCH.

* The Apostle St. John, Bernini tells us, meeting Cerinthus one day going into a bath, turned to those along with him, saying: "Let us hasten out of this, lest we be buried alive"; and they had scarcely gone outside when the whole building fell with a sudden crash, and the unfortunate Cerinthus was overwhelmed in the ruins. One of the impious doctrines of this heretic was, that Jesus was a mere man, born as all other men are, and that when he was baptized in the River Jordan, *Christ*—a virtue or a power—descended on him in the form of a dove, and filled him with knowledge; but that, after his preaching and miracles, he was deserted by Christ, and left to darkness and death. To silence Cerinthus and other heretical declaimers, St. John, at the request of the Bishop of Asia, wrote his Gospel.

ST. POLYCARP, AND MARCION.

+ Marcion, walking one day through the streets of Rome,

met St. Polycarp, his old friend, and seeing that he was not recognized by him, said to him : " Do you not know me ? " " I do know you well ", answered Polycarp. " *I know you as the firstborn of the devil*".

ST. JEAN FRANCES FREMIOT DE CHANTAL, AND HER HORROR OF HERESY.

† St. Jean Frances of Chantal showed from her early years great zeal for the Catholic religion. When only five years old she reproached a heretic for blaspheming against Jesus Christ in the blessed Eucharist. The Protestant, finding her so incensed at what he said, took from his pocket some sweets, presented them to her, saying : " Let us be reconciled, let us forgive and forget ". Little Frances took them, cast them into the fire, saying : *Thus it is that those who blaspheme Christ shall burn in hell.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What do you understand by the word Incarnation ? Do the Divine and human natures form but one Person ?
2. How do you prove that Jesus Christ is true God ? How true Man ?
3. Has Jesus Christ two natures ? In what manner are they united ?
4. Relate how the youth answered the objection of the Eutychian. Has Christ two wills ?
5. As there are in Christ two natures, are there also two Persons ?
6. What do you mean, when you say that Christ redeemed us ?
7. What did Jesus Christ undergo to redeem and save us ?
8. Were the sufferings of Jesus Christ more than sufficient to satisfy the Divine Justice ?
9. Has Jesus Christ, by His sufferings and death, delivered us from the slavery of hell ?
10. As Jesus Christ has suffered so much for man, will all men be saved ?
11. On what conditions will the fruits of Christ's merits be applied to our souls ?
12. Can you show by a familiar example how Christ has

been the Saviour of all who lived before His coming upon earth ?

13. What signification has the figure of the cross ?
14. Was it as God, or as Man, that Jesus Christ suffered and died ?

PRACTICE.

1. Often make acts of faith in the Divinity and Humanity of Jesus Christ.
2. Recollect how grievous sin must be, as Jesus Christ became Man to expiate it.
3. Often pronounce the holy name of Jesus, particularly when you are tempted to sin.

PRAYER.

O Divine Jesus ! we shall never cease giving Thee thanks for Thy many favours and graces, particularly for Thy great favour of becoming Man for us. We by sin had become liable to damnation, and should have been the victims of hell's eternal flames, had it not been for Thy great mercy. To redeem us from eternal torments, Thou, in Thy great love for us, camest down from heaven, assumed our poor human nature, and suffered and died for us. Oh ! may we never forget Thy goodness, but so live, that our lives may be a continual thanksgiving to Thee. Amen.

CHAPTER XII.

OUR FIRST PARENTS.

Q. How came we to be in the power of the devil ?

A. By the disobedience of our first parents, in eating the forbidden fruit (*Gen.*, ii. 3).

1. We were, dear children, brought under “ the power of the devil ” by the sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve. After creating Adam from the

slime of the earth, and forming Eve from one of Adam's ribs, He placed them in a lovely garden which He had planted from the beginning. In that garden grew the most beautiful trees, bearing the sweetest blossoms and fruit ; flowers of every kind abounded in it. "The Lord God had planted a paradise of pleasure from the beginning, and He brought forth of the ground all manner of trees, fair to behold and pleasant to eat of" (*Gen.*, ii.). This delightful garden was called Paradise, a name derived from a Hebrew word signifying a fruit garden or orchard. It is also called the garden of Eden, because it was situated in Eden, a province of the East, near the sources of the Euphrates, Tigris, Nile, and Gangés. From the midst of this garden flowed a sparkling spring, which, dividing itself into four streams, watered the whole of it : "And a river went out of the place of pleasure to water Paradise, which from thence is divided into four heads" (*Gen.*, ii.). Into this delightful abode God introduced Adam, and gave it to him to cultivate and dress. The dressing of the garden was not to be laborious or painful to Adam, but would be attended with pleasure, joy, and satisfaction ; to cultivate it would be to him a delightful recreation.

2. In this lovely sojourn there was everything that could delight the eye and charm the senses. Everything grand and beautiful in the world was found in paradise—a serene smiling sky over it, an agreeable variety of hill and dale, charming scenery and lovely views, trees of every kind, charged with delicious fruit and loaded with sweet perfumes. In a word, primitive nature displayed all her rich ornaments, and unfolded her vast resources in the garden of Eden. All the advantages of the four seasons were experienced at one and the same time : there was no burning sun to scorch and make the land sterile, nor was there any winter cold to chill its fruitfulness.

3. Of the different trees which grew in this garden, there were two in particular which God planted in the middle of it. One was called the tree of life, because the fruit of it was to preserve the life of all who should eat of it. The other was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because man's happiness or misery was in some sort bound up with the fruit of this tree ; that is, if Adam should not eat of this fruit, he should have a knowledge of everything good—he would for ever be in the enjoyment of true happiness ; but if, contrary to the command of God, he should eat it, he would know evil, as, by disobeying God's command, he would fall into a gulf of misery and unhappiness.

4. Adam had permission from God to eat of the fruit of all the trees in the garden, except the fruit of one alone. Of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he was commanded, under pain of death, not to eat : “ Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat ; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat ; for in whatsoever day thou shalt eat of it, thou shalt die the death ” (*Gen.*, ii.). When Adam received this command of God, Eve was not then created ; but yet, before her transgression, she was made fully aware of God's prohibition, and the importance of complying with it. It was a very easy thing to observe this command of God, as the fruit of the other trees was sufficient to satisfy the wants of our first parents. And yet, dear children, they disobeyed this command, and they made light of the threat which was held out to them, and so they ate of the *forbidden* fruit, and even in Paradise broke the law of God ; and by so doing they brought us under “ the power of the devil ”. By what means “ the power of the devil ” was extended to *us*, we shall see in a subsequent chapter.

Q. Who were our first parents?

A. Adam and Eve, the first man and woman.

5. When God made the heavens and the earth, and decked them out in all their variety and beauty, there was not yet a human being to take delight in it, and to praise the good and wise Creator who had made it. Then God said : "Let us make man to our image and likeness ; he shall have dominion over the fishes of the sea, the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and over the whole earth". Almighty God then made man out of the soft moist earth, and breathed into him the breath of life. Thus man became a living soul, and God called him Adam. Then causing a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, He took out one of his ribs, filling up its place with flesh ; and the Lord God built the rib which He took from Adam into a woman, and brought her to Adam.

6. God having created Adam and Eve to His "own image and likeness", bestowed on them, with a liberal hand, every grace and gift, supernatural as well as natural, that could render them perfect in this world. Their bodies were beautifully formed—the head, eyes, and every lineament of the countenance exquisitely moulded and fashioned. All the most beautiful traits of man and woman were to be found in them. They were subject neither to pain nor labour; sickness could not come near them, for they enjoyed perfect health of both mind and body. They had not, like us, to pass through the weakness of infancy and the dangers of childhood, for they proceeded from the hands of God fully grown, with all the qualities of mature age. And their souls were even more perfect than their bodies, on account of the rare gifts by which God endowed them. They were intelligent, and adorned with every sort of knowledge that man is capable of; no dangerous ignorance or defective

judgment or reason sullied the beauties of their minds ; no passion troubled the serenity of their souls or the peace of their hearts ; all their desires were upright and good ; their wills had no inclination to evil ; their souls were free from all those passions and irregular desires and appetites which so violently torment our souls. In everything they followed the dictates of right reason ; the body obeyed the soul, and the soul was obedient to God. It is for this reason that the Scriptures tell us, "that they were both naked and not ashamed".

7. Created in a state of innocence and justice Adam and Eve were happy. They were strangers to those brutal passions which now agitate the heart of man. The most perfect calm possessed their souls ; their hearts swam, as it were, in a river of content and tranquillity ; they loved their Creator—they loved Him with the most tender love—and their Creator loved them. He complacently looked upon them as the *masterpiece* of His power and wisdom. He conversed familiarly with them, and they lived with Him on terms of lovely and saintly intimacy. All visible creatures were obedient to them, and ministered to their pleasures. The birds hovered around them, gladdened their ears with their melodious harmony, and celebrated the happiness and glory of these first sovereigns of nature. Each revolving season brought with it a new variety of joys. No jarring elements could introduce disease into their frame, or torture their body with pain. Each morning's dawn awakened them to a new day, which would glide smoothly along, unvexed by anxious cares ; and the departing sun invited them to a calm and undisturbed repose. Dear to their Creator as the apple of His eye, and sheltered under the shadow of His wings, their hearts glowed with constant gratitude and love, and exulted in the expectation of being

at length removed from that scene of earthly bliss, only to be put in possession of delights still more exquisite, of pleasures permanent and immortal. The assurance of everlasting happiness depended on a short trial. Their benevolent Creator wished that obedience to Him, and a proper use of their liberty, should be the condition on which happiness, eternal happiness, was to be gained. But unhappily they abused that liberty, and so ruined themselves and us, their descendants, as we shall see immediately.*

Q. Why did God command our first parents not to eat the forbidden fruit?

A. To make them sensible of His dominion over them, and their dependence on Him, and to try their obedience.

8. Dear children, Adam and Eve were commanded by Almighty God not to eat the fruit of the tree "of the knowledge of good and evil", that they might learn what it was to obey God, and not to think everything in the garden was their own, instead of being the gift of their loving and good Creator. They received that command from God "to make them sensible", or to let them know that He was their Lord and Master, that they were altogether depending on Him, and so should obey Him. This was a just command, an order that our first parents could not find fault with, for it was a very easy thing to comply with it. Must we not all, dear children, allow that sovereigns and princes have every right to require marks of respect and submission from their subjects? God, in laying this commandment on them, wished to show them, that though they were lords and masters of the creation, still they had no right over the created things, if not granted to them by Him. By this command of not eating "the forbidden

fruit", He wanted to give them an occasion of meriting, by their obedience and fidelity, a continuation of His favours here, and eternal happiness hereafter, for which He had destined them.

Q. Did Adam and Eve long remain in that state of innocence in which they were created?

A. No, they soon forfeited that grace and innocence in which they were created.

9. We cannot, dear children, tell exactly how long Adam and Eve continued faithful to God, and so we cannot say how long they were happy. It is very probable that their happy state did not continue long, and that by their disobedience they very soon lost all the blessings conferred upon them. Being gifted with free will, they could obey or disobey God. Unhappily for them and for us, they forgot all the favours conferred on them, they proved unfaithful to Him, they abused their liberty, and disobeyed and revolted against their Creator. In consequence of this disobedience, God soon punished them, by driving them out of the garden of Paradise, and depriving them of the delights and pleasures which they had enjoyed. Ah! dear children, what dread we should have of the sin of *disobedience!* That sin it was that rendered our first parents wretched and miserable, and brought down upon us all the evils and sufferings of this life. Oh! how we should learn from the sad example of Adam and Eve to obey God, and our parents and superiors, with joy and cheerfulness.

Q. Who tempted our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit?

A. The devil, envying their happy state.

10. When, dear children, Adam and Eve had

been for some time living together in the beautiful garden planted for them by God—happy in each other's company, not knowing anything about sorrow, or suffering, or death, but living in innocence and peace, and loving their God above all things—a serpent one day twined himself round the forbidden tree as Eve was standing near it. This serpent was a devil, jealous of the happiness of Adam and Eve. He could not bear to see two creatures, who were taken from the slime of the earth, so happy and so blest in their fidelity to God, while he, who was formerly an inhabitant of heaven, was now cast down into hell, sunk in disgrace and misery. Fired with jealousy, he resolved to ruin them, and blast their prospects and the prospects of all mankind. The more effectually to succeed in his fiendish work, he took the form of a serpent, for of all animals the serpent is the most subtle. Then thinking that the woman could be more easily seduced than the man, he addressed himself to her, and said—"Why has God commanded you that you should not eat of every tree of the garden?" Eve allowed herself to be drawn into conversation with the serpent, and answered artlessly—"Of the fruit of the trees that are in Paradise we do eat: only of the fruit of this tree which is in the midst of Paradise, God has commanded that we should not eat, and that we should not touch it, lest perhaps we die" (*Gen.*, iii).

11. No, answered the serpent, you will not die. It is not the fear of your dying that has made God tell you not to eat of that fruit, but it is the fear that by eating it you should know as much as Himself, for He knows very well that if you eat of the fruit of that tree, your eyes will then be opened, and you will be as Gods, knowing good and evil. Eve, instead of turning away her ear, as she should, from such deceitful language, listened to it, and more-

over listened to it with pleasure. She began to think on the words ; the promise of knowing as much as God flattered her vanity ; she sucked the poison of his language into her very soul ; then she began to hesitate ; she first looked at the serpent, and then at the tree : the fruit looked lovely, and seemed to be "particularly beautiful to the eye, most fair to look upon". She looked at it, she gazed upon it, and the more she looked upon it the more beautiful it appeared to her. That it was as delicious to the taste as it was delightful to the eye, she had no doubt. She forgot the command of God not to eat it ; she extended her hand, she took it down, she ate of it. No sooner had she eaten of it, than she went away and brought some to Adam, and when she met him, presented it to him, who in like manner ate it, and, alas ! thus both broke the law of their God even in Paradise. This, dear children, is the sin from which death and all the miseries of this life have followed. This is the sin which has ruined the whole posterity of Adam and Eve. This is the sin by which we have all been brought into the power of the devil.†

Q. Whom do you mean by the devil ?

A. One of the rebellious or fallen angels whom God cast out of heaven.

12. When, dear children, we speak of the devil, we mean one of those bright and beautiful angels whom God, at one time, cast out of heaven on account of their pride, and condemned them to hell, to suffer for ever all kinds of torment and pain. These glorious angels have been ugly devils ever since that time. They are called *demons* or *devils*, words signifying *calumniators*, *enemies*—because they are the implacable enemies both of God and man, and leave no means untried to destroy us both here and hereafter.

They are sometimes called *evil spirits*, on account of their obstinacy in evil, their hatred of everything good, and the artifices to which they have recourse, to render all those who have been created to enjoy the happiness of which they had been deprived, like themselves. They are often called *angels of darkness*, because, in punishment of their pride, they have lost their beauty and brightness, and have been cast down into that place of horror and *darkness*, where reigns eternal despair—hell, the prison of the damned. The devil is again called *Satan*, a word having the same meaning as demon, and derived from the Hebrew. It signifies an enemy, an adversary, one who opposes and persecutes us. The devil is too called *Belial*, that is, a wicked, disobedient, rebellious spirit. The devils are often represented under the figure of wild, horrible beasts, to show us how much they should be dreaded, and how miserable that soul becomes who, through sin, has become the slave of the demon.

Q. Is not the devil called the prince of this world, the god of this world?

A. Yes; our Lord and St. Paul have so named him.

13. Our Lord, dear children, has called the devil the *prince* of this world; not that he is such through any right or merit, for he is the most miserable and the most detestable being in existence. He is the *god of the world*; because, before the coming of the Son of God, he was paid divine honour through every part of the world, if we except the small kingdom of Judea, where the true God was known and adored; and even in that kingdom the people abandoned the true God from time to time, and paid divine worship to idols. Satan is even to this day adored by pagans, and by other wicked and irreligious persons, who give themselves up to every sort of crime, and yield to every suggestion of hell. He is prince of the

wicked world, for he rules and governs it, and fills it with his own malice, and renders it his slave. Oh! how we should always lament over the wretched state of so many in this world, and never cease praying to God for the conversion of those miserable Christians, those wretched slaves of hell. Let us, dear children, endeavour always to serve God with zeal and fervour, and in some manner atone for the treachery of those who forsake the God who redeemed them, and give themselves up to the service of His avowed enemy.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE SITE OF THE GARDEN OF PARADISE.

* A great many learned commentators of the sacred writings place the centre or middle of Paradise on the banks of the Jordan, and thence extend it on the west to the Mediterranean, and on the north and east to the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris. It extends in a southern direction, they say, to the rivers Gehon and Phison, the former flowing through the Desert of Arabia, and the latter through Arabia Felix. Other commentators, whose opinions are better founded, place the terrestrial Paradise between the Tigris and Euphrates, near the place where afterwards stood the famous Babylon. If the sources of the Ganges, Nile, Tigris, and the Euphrates, be not now changed, and if these be the rivers which sprung from the fountains of Paradise, a matter undecided, the garden must have comprised a great part of the world, as the Ganges rises in India, and the Nile about the middle of Africa. Some assert that this beautiful garden is still in being, the residence of Enoch and Elias, but that God will not permit the curiosity of man to be gratified by the discovery of it.

THE SERPENT THAT SEDUCED EVE.

† The serpent that tempted Eve, according to many learned writers, was the *infernal Spirit*, that is, one of the fallen angels, or evil spirits, lurking in the organs of a real serpent. To account for the easy and familiar conversation which Eve

held with an animal so repulsive by nature, many commentators tell us that at that time the serpent was not an object so revolting as it is now, for all animals were then subject to man, and so could not cause fright, much less injury ; again, that the tempter might have chosen one beautiful in appearance, like the winged serpents found in Arabia and Egypt, whose wings, when reflecting the rays of the sun, produce a grand effect. That the serpent really spoke, there can, of course, be no doubt ; and that Eve manifested no surprise, is what we may expect, for then Eve was young in experience, and, perhaps, never saw the serpent before. The warbling of the nightingale, when heard for the first time, was as much calculated to surprise her, as the language of the serpent.

HENRI OF GENOUDÉ'S REPLY.

† The question, Who created the angels ? was one day proposed to M. Genoude's three boys. It was God, answered all. But who created the devils ? was again asked. All were for some time silent. Henry at last cried out : "It was God who created the angels, but it was angels who made themselves devils".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What rendered the garden of Paradise so beautiful ? What other name is it called ?
2. Give a description of the garden of Paradise.
3. Why were the two trees called the trees of life, and of good and evil ?
4. Did Adam and Eve obey the command of God ?
5. How did God create Adam and Eve ?
6. What were the gifts which God bestowed on Adam and Eve ?
7. What constituted the happiness of our first parents ?
8. Why was it that God would not allow Adam and Eve to eat the forbidden fruit ?
9. Did our first parents remain long faithful to God ?
10. Why did the devil tempt our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit ?
11. What arguments did the devil make use of to tempt Eve ? Did Eve listen to him ?
12. What names are applied to our enemy the devil ?
13. Why is Satan called the prince and god of the world ?

PRACTICE.

1. Adore, praise, and thank God for creating a being so noble as man—a being made to His own image and likeness.
2. Bewail the unhappy fall of man, so noble in his origin, and grieve over the sad results of it.
3. Be always on your guard against the temptations of the devil, who is always going about like a roaring lion to devour and destroy you.

PRAYER.

O my God ! we have now been taught how noble and illustrious man is in his origin, how beautiful he was when he proceeded from your hands—pure, innocent, and holy. But, alas ! Lord, how great was his fall ! From being Thy beloved child, he became in a moment the slave of the devil. From the history of Adam and Eve, we have learned the woful consequences of *disobedience*. For the future, we shall, O God ! always hold in horror that sin, and by our willingness in performing the orders of our parents and superiors, shall prove that we desire to become *obedient* children. Amen.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE ANGELS.

Q. What do you mean by angels?

A. Pure spirits, without a body, created to adore and enjoy God in heaven.

1. Angels, dear children, are “ pure spirits ”, that is, spiritual and intelligent beings, not created to be united to *bodies*. They have no *bodies* as we have, nor size, nor figure, nor colour, nor head, nor feet, nor hands, and so cannot be seen or felt by our senses. Angels hold the first rank among all creatures, for they are “ pure spirits ”, and understand and know more than all other created beings, and have a greater

resemblance to God. Next in rank to the angels and a "little lower" than them, is man, for he alone, of all created beings in this world, is created to the image of God, is gifted with reason, and is destined for eternal glory and happiness. Though the angels are "pure spirits", and so have no bodies, yet they are represented by sculptors and painters as having bodies and wings, in order that the remembrance of them may be more impressed on our minds. They are represented sometimes as young men, because they have occasionally appeared on this world in the form of young men, when executing the orders of God. The angels that Mary Magdalen saw in our Lord's sepulchre on Easter Sunday morning, had the appearance of two young men. They are represented with wings, in order to express the amazing celerity with which they move in an instant from one extremity of the world to the other when bearing messages from God; and it may be, too, because the prophets, in their sublime and figurative language, tell us that through respect they cover themselves with their wings in the presence of God. They are generally represented under the figure of children, for the purpose of making known to us their innocence and continual youth. They are *intelligent creatures*, because they think, and have knowledge, understanding, and reason in a far more eminent degree than we have. They know many things which we do not know, and they can do many things which are impossible to us.

2. The angels, dear children, were "created to adore and enjoy God in heaven"; they came forth pure and innocent from the hands of God. Ornamented with every virtue, enriched with the most noble qualities, they are continually paying their adorations to God. Inebriated with those delights which are found in the possession of God, their sove-

reign happiness, they give themselves up to transports of the liveliest joy, and chaunt forth to the Lord eternal *alleluias* in strains of heavenly harmony, such as no mortal can conceive. They "enjoy", and for ever will "enjoy", the presence of their glorious Creator, which constitutes their happiness, and sing forth continually that sublime canticle : "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who was, and who is, and who is to come ; honour and benediction to Him that sitteth on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever" (*Apoc.*, iv. 8). Do you not, dear children, sincerely desire to be one day united with those "pure spirits", to sing with them the praises of the Lord ? You do. Well, then, be "angels" here, imitate the purity of these celestial spirits, and you will assuredly "enjoy" God as they enjoy Him now.

Q. Were the angels created for any other purpose ?

A. Yes, to assist before the throne of God, and to minister unto Him ; and they have often been sent as messengers from God to man, and are also appointed our guardians (*Heb.*, i. 7 ; *Matt.*, iv. 6 ; xviii. 10).

3. The nine choirs of angels—the "seraphim", burning with love, and transformed, as it were, into God by the fire of charity ; the "cherubim", endowed with intelligence inferior only to that of God ; the "thrones", on whom the Eternal reposes with complacency ; the "dominations", whose authority extends over all the works of God's hands ; the "principalities", who are crowned in heaven like kings ; the "powers", who make the devils tremble ; the "virtues", by whom the Omnipotent works the wonders of His right hand, awakes up the tempests and whirlwinds, and lances forth the lightnings ; the

"archangels", whose office it is to announce to men the mighty things which the Lord is pleased to do ; the "angels", who are the ordinary ministers of His behests, and who preside over the destinies of man— all this celestial hierarchy surround and "assist at the throne of God", adoring His wisdom, His goodness, His power. They "minister unto Him", always ready to do anything that He requires ; when He speaks they answer, "Here we are". They receive His orders with joy, they perform them with a holy eagerness ; the readiness of their obedience equals the rapidity of the winds. To make known to us the promptitude and quickness with which they execute the commands of God, is the reason, as we have said before, that they are represented with wings.

4. "They have often been sent as messengers from God to man", as we are told in many parts of the sacred Scriptures. They have often come down from heaven, bearing the orders of God, and making known to mortals the designs of God's goodness, justice, and mercy ; sometimes speaking in a voice of thunder to the wicked, and at other times in accents of joy to the good. They were sent to Abraham and Lot to tell them that God had taken them under His protection, but that He was to let fall on the impure towns of Sodom and Gomorrah His direst vengeance. The Angel Gabriel was sent to the Prophet Daniel to tell him the precise time of the coming of the promised Redeemer, the mighty works which this Liberator was to perform, and the terrible chastisements that were to be inflicted on the ungrateful city of Jerusalem. The same Angel Gabriel was some time after sent to Zachary to tell him of the birth of St. John the Baptist, and to the Blessed Virgin to announce to her that she was to become the mother of God. Should not the example, dear children, of those blessed spirits, ever adoring and praising God, invite

ns to be fervent and exact in the holy exercise of prayer, and to be ever mindful of God's presence? Should not the ready and loving obedience with which they execute the commands of God teach us to be no longer slothful or negligent in God's service, but to endeavour to perform willingly and joyfully everything that God requires of us?*

5. The angels "are also appointed our guardians". Yes, dear children, God has given His angels charge of us, that they may continually watch over us, and *guard* us through life. Our faith tells us so. We are told so in the sacred Scriptures : "For He hath given His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways" (*Ps.*, xc. 11). Those heavenly spirits, forgetful, as it were, of their superiority over us, *acquit themselves* of this office of guardianship with the tenderest affection. They love us, they take a lively interest in everything regarding us, they assist us in a thousand ways, and preserve us, without our knowing it, from innumerable dangers. And not only do all the angels love and protect us, but there is one in particular appointed by God to each of us, to guard, to watch over, and protect us from the many dangers by which we are surrounded. This guardian angel is always at our side, warding off our enemies, leading us out of danger and harm, taking us, as the Scriptures say, in his hands, that we may escape the snares which are laid for us at almost every step. There is scarcely one who, on looking back on his past life, will not find some instances of his guardian angel's protection. These good angels never leave us, even for a moment; they go out and come in with us, says St. Augustine. Wherever we go they accompany us; from our very birth they are hovering around us; and when we shall have breathed forth our last sigh, they will attend our souls to the judgment-seat of God.

6. They are continually interceding for us with God. As they "always see the face of the Father who is in heaven", they speak to Him about our affairs, they protect our interests, and solicit from God every grace that we require; they demand of God, in the words of our Lord, "that none of those entrusted to them should perish". They offer to God all our good works; "when thou didst pray with tears", said the Angel Raphael to Tobias, "and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner and hide the dead by day in thy house, I offered thy prayer to the Lord" (*Tob.*, xii. 12). What a consoling thought it is, to know that we have such powerful and influential *guardians* presenting to God all our good works, our prayers, our little mortifications, the services that we pay Him, the charitable things that we do for our neighbours.

7. They defend us against the attacks of the devil. The devil "is going about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour", says St. Peter. But, dear children, we have our guardian angel as a defender by our side. He takes up arms and fights for us, and subdues the rage of the *roaring lion*, as in former times the Angel Raphael, the guardian of the young Tobias, "took and bound the devil", who had killed the seven husbands of Sara. Yes, if you escape the attacks of your enemy, the devil, you owe your safety to your guardian angel. Your guardian angel is a powerful, faithful, and loving friend, who is always with you, taking you by the hand, bearing you up in his arms, watching every step you take lest you may meet with harm. He inspires you with good thoughts, he gives you wise counsel, he rejoices when he sees you advance in virtue; he is saddened, he laments, and sighs, when he finds you straying away from the paths of holiness and following the bent of your evil inclinations. He endeavours to recall you back from

your evil ways ; he invites you, he presses you to return to the path of virtue, for he is desirous to conduct you on the way of heaven. Whenever he finds us sleeping on the brink of a precipice, our guardian angel awakes us. Arise, he says, as he formerly said to St. Peter in his prison, hasten from this place, quit this house, burst these chains with which your enemy has bound you. Ah ! dear children, if at any time you have been preserved from danger, and that in a way you could not account for—if at any time you felt, as it were, some unseen hand leading you out of the way of harm—it is your angel guardian you have to thank ; it is your angel guardian who has rescued you from the snares laid for your destruction. Such is the friend that God has given you all ; and oh ! how grateful should you be to Him for granting you so faithful and loving a guardian.

8. The angels are charged with the care of even empires, and kingdoms, and provinces. According to some writers, each city, each parish, each community, has its *guardian angel*. The Holy Fathers teach us that millions of angels surround the universal Church—the sheepfold of Jesus Christ—to defend it in the continual war it has to maintain against the bad angels. The Scriptures speak of the angel guardian of the Persians and the Greeks. St. John, in his *Apocalypse*, writes to the angels of the seven Christian Churches of Asia Minor ; and the holy fathers say that, by the word angels are not only meant the bishops of those churches, but also the angels whom God appointed as their guardians.†

Q. What are the duties which we should fulfil towards our guardian angels ?

A. We should thank, reverence, and invoke all the angels and particularly our guardian angels, whose presence we should always respect.

9. Protestants, Anabaptists, and almost all the so-called reformers, attack the devotion which the Catholic Church pays the holy angels. They assert that we have no authority in Scripture for a devotion of that nature. What blindness! We read in the book of Genesis that Jacob asked the blessing of the angel with whom he wrestled : "I will not let thee go except thou bless me" (*Gen.*, xxxii.). The same patriarch, when giving his blessing to the sons of Joseph, said : "The angel that delivereth me from all evils, bless these boys" (*Gen.*, xlvi.). Let Protestants say what they will, this certainly is a prayer, and so, a devotion paid the angels. All the holy fathers have spoken in clear terms on the subject of the devotion to the angels. Origen himself invoked the intercession of his guardian angel. And surely the doctrine of the early Church must be as well known in Origen's time as in the nineteenth century.

10. Our first duty towards our angel guardian is *gratitude* for his many favours to us. As we have just seen, dear children, he aids and assists us, and is always present to preserve us from danger; and surely we should be guilty of the greatest ingratitude if we neglected returning him thanks. Our second duty towards our guardian angel is respect for his presence. When a lord, or some person distinguished by dignity, rank, or station, appears among us, do we not always pay him marks of respect? But, he who is continually at your side, is a lord of the heavenly court, is one of those bright, glorious spirits, who are always around the throne of God. In whatever place you be, he sees you, he hears you, and almost touches you. Then always have respect for the presence of him who "sees the face of the Father who is in heaven". The eye of your guardian angel is always fixed on you, and will you dare to do or say in his presence,

what you would be ashamed to do or say in the presence of your parents or superiors ?

11. You should, in the third place, recommend yourself to the protection of your guardian angel. Often implore his assistance, particularly when you are tempted to sin. If you do he will shield you from danger, he will take up arms in your defence, and will make you triumph over the devil and your evil passions ; he will never abandon you ; he will ever be faithful to you, and at your death he will accompany you to the tribunal of your Sovereign Judge, and there present Him with all the good works you have performed during life. Let us never forget, children, that our angel guardian bears us up in his arms, as a fond father carries his child ; "in their hands they shall bear you up". He watches over you with the most tender solicitude. Love, then, your angel guardian, pray to him every morning and night, and invoke him during the day. Consult him on all your designs, all your affairs. Under all your crosses, afflictions, and miseries, have recourse to him for support and consolation. Implore his powerful protection in your dangers, necessities, and cares. Cry out to him, like young Tobias, when he beheld the monstrous fish come out of the river Tigris to devour him : "Sir, he cometh upon me". Ah ! my angel guardian, I am lost if you assist me not, the devil is going to devour me. If you pray in this manner, you will find the enemy of your soul " panting before your feet" (*Tob.*, vi. 3).

Q. At what time were the angels created ?

A. The angels were created in the beginning, when the world was created.

12. The angels have been created from the beginning of the world, but on what day they were created

we cannot, with any certainty, say. Some of the holy fathers are of opinion that they were created when God said, *Let there be light*: others think that they were created when God made the firmament. But it is a matter of very little importance to us to know at what time they were created. It is enough to know that there are angels, and that we are told so by the Sacred Scriptures. That the angels are innumerable, we learn from the book of Job. The prophet Daniel tells us that "thousands of thousands ministered to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before the throne of God" (*Dan.*, vii.). Some of the holy fathers say that the number of angels is a thousand times greater than that of men. St. Ambrose, in explaining the parable of the ninety-nine sheep, enters upon that subject.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE ARCHANGEL RAPHAEL AND THE YOUNG TOBIAS.

* Raphael, one of the seven angels who are always surrounding the throne of God, prepared to execute his commands, took the form and name of Azarias, and presented himself under the appearance and equipage of a traveller before the young Tobias. Tobias, little thinking that under such a disguise was concealed the angel whom God had appointed for his guidance and protection, asked him who he was, and from whence, and whether he knew the way into the country of the Medes? The angel replied that he was one of Israel, and well acquainted with the roads of the country. The young Tobias was overjoyed at his good fortune in meeting with a stranger so qualified and willing to attend him; he introduced him to his father, who was equally pleased with the candour and friendly promises of the comely youth, that he would conduct his son to Gabelus, at Rages, and bring him home again. Under the form and name of a travelling Israelite, Raphael began to direct the steps of young Tobias with peculiar care, which has been always looked

upon as a specimen of that care which our guardian angels have over us. They travelled together till they arrived at Rages. When they came within sight of the town, his guardian informed Tobias that they must lodge with one Raguel, and that he should demand his only daughter in marriage. Tobias was alarmed at the proposal, for he knew that she had been already given to seven different husbands, one after another, who, through the malice of the devil, had been all killed the very first night after their marriage. Azarias reasoned away his fears by telling him that those who married with good intentions need not fear the devil's power. The young Tobias, according to the angel's direction, went to Raguel's house, where he met with a friendly welcome. When dinner was ready, Tobias made his proposals to Raguel, and declared that he would neither eat nor drink in his house, unless he would promise to grant his daughter Sarah in marriage. Raguel, knowing what had happened to her former husbands, knew not what answer to give. As he stood thus in suspense, the angel assured him that by a special Providence his daughter had been reserved for Tobias, and therefore no one hitherto could have her. Raguel had no further doubt. The matrimonial contract was then taken down in writing; they made merry and blessed God. At night, Raguel, expecting nothing but the death of Tobias, ordered his grave to be prepared, but, surprised in the morning to find him safe and sound, he filled up the grave, and gave free scope to the transports of his joy. The good parents of Tobias were all this while in great anxiety about their son, whose absence began to seem very long. His mother went every day to the top of the hill, to see if she could descry him coming; she at last perceived him, and ran with great haste to impart the joyful tidings to her husband. The old father, who was blind, rose up, and giving a servant his hand, ran stumbling on to meet his son. They eagerly embraced each other; they poured out the tears of gladness into one another's bosom, and when they had adored and given thanks to God, they sat down together. As the angel told him, he produced the gall of the fish that darted from the Tigris to devour him, rubbed his father's eyes with it, and immediately restored him to sight. As a reward to the faithful guide, to whose services they attributed their good fortune, the family of Tobias offered half of their property. The angel then thought it time to let them know who he was; he told them that his name was Raphael, one of the seven spirits that constantly attended before the throne of God; that he had been commanded by Almighty God to accompany the son in that

visible manner; and that "when old Tobias prayed with tears, and did bury the dead, and did leave his dinner and did hide the dead by day in his house, and bury them at night", he offered up all these prayers, and fastings, and alms-deeds to the Lord, and that they were very acceptable in His eyes. Then the angel gave him his blessing, and vanished out of sight (*Tob.*).

THE ANGEL AND GEDEON,

† God abandoned the Israelites for seven years to the power of the Midianites. The Midianites were a cruel enemy, who ravaged and destroyed the whole country. The distress to which the Israelites were then reduced became extreme, and extorted from them the cries of repentance. God heard their cries, and fixed upon Gedeon for their deliverer. Gedeon was a valiant young man, of an obscure family, of the tribe of Manasse. God sent an angel to inform him that the Lord was with him, and that upon the strength of his arm depended the safety of Israel. The angel, in the form and habit of a stranger, presented himself in view under an oak tree, near the place where Gedeon was winnowing his father's corn. The heavenly messenger delivered his commission to the chosen youth, and assured him, that notwithstanding the low opinion he entertained of himself, he should drive the Midianites before him, and destroy them as easily as if they were but one man. Gedeon desired to know upon what ground he had made him that extraordinary promise, and begged he would not go till he had taken some refreshment. The angel having accepted his offer, he quickly ran to prepare a kid and unleavened bread. He boiled the kid, and as soon as it was ready put the flesh of it into a basket, and the broth into a pot, to carry to his guest under the tree. The angel bade him lay the bread and meat upon the rock, and pour the broth thereon; which being done, he touched them with a rod he held in his hand, and behold, a sudden flame blazed out of the rock, and consumed both the flesh and the loaves. The heavenly messenger vanished immediately out of sight, leaving Gedeon half dead with fright for having conversed so long with an angel, whom he had all the while taken for a common man. Almighty God inspired Gedeon with a holy confidence, and commissioned him to go and overturn the altar of Baal, to cut down the grove that surrounded it, and to erect upon the summit of the same rock an altar to the living God, where he should offer one of his father's bullocks in sacrifice (*Judges, vi.*).

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. If angels be pure spirits, why are they represented with bodies ?
2. What is the occupation of the angels in heaven ?
3. Into how many choirs are the angels divided ? Name them ?
4. Have the angels been often sent to this world on errands ?
5. Do our guardian angels watch, defend, and protect us ?
6. Are all our good works offered to God by the angels ?
7. How are we defended and protected by them ?
8. Are angels charged with the care of empires, provinces, and kingdoms ?
9. Is there any proof in Scripture for the devotion paid to angels ?
10. Should we thank, honour, and respect our guardian angels ?
11. Should we love and often invoke them ?
12. Can we know with certainty when the angels were created ?

PRACTICE.

1. Have a particular devotion to your guardian angel, and place unlimited confidence in him as your best friend.
1. Every morning, on awaking, after having offered yourself to God, pray to your guardian angel that he may protect you during the day.
3. When lying down to rest at night, thank your angel guardian for his protection during the day, and beg of him to preserve you during the night from all danger.

PRAYER.

O my God ! we give thee thanks for having given us an angel to protect and guard us. Grant that we be ever mindful of his presence. My good angel ! we shall never forget the particular care you take of us. We place full confidence in you ; we will always respect your presence and follow your guidance ; obtain for us the grace of never doing or saying anything that may offend the pure eye of God.—Amen.

CHAPTER XIV.

ON THE REBELLIOUS ANGELS.

Q. Why were any Angels cast out of heaven?

A. Because *through pride* they rebelled against God (*Isaias*, xiv.).

1. God created the angels in the state of grace and holiness, and gave them a will disposed to love God. As the will given them was *free*, they could persevere in grace and holiness, and so render their happy state eternal; or they could abuse the graces bestowed on them, and do evil, and so forfeit their right to heaven. On their perseverance in holiness depended their eternal happiness. Many among them persevered in obedience, and secured for themselves an everlasting crown; but many others failed in their obedience, and miserably fell. "Pride" was the cause of their fall. The chief of them, called Lucifer—a name signifying one who carries light along with him—was the most beautiful, the most perfect, and the most resplendent of all. Dazzled with the brilliant qualities with which he was endowed, he took complacency in himself; he forgot that he owed whatever perfections he had to God; the rank in which he was placed did not satisfy him; he wanted to be on an equality with his Creator: "I will ascend above the height of the clouds", said he in his pride, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, and will be like the Most High" (*Isaias*, xiv. 14). At once millions of angels took part in his revolt, and joined his rebellious standard. Through unaccountable blindness they preferred the rule of that guilty leader to the sweet service of their loving Creator.

2. There was then, says St. John, a great combat in heaven ; Michael, the Archangel, full of zeal for the interests of his Creator, made the heavens resound with the rallying cry : *Who is like to God?* Soon a multitude of Angels responded to the appeal, joined Michael's standard, attacked the rebel chief and his followers. Resistance was vain, the rebels were vanquished, and their place was no longer found in heaven. Then a mighty voice was heard : " Rejoice, O heavens ! and you that dwell therein. Wo to the earth and to the sea, because the devil has come down unto you full of anger and rage" (*Apoc.*, xii. 10). There are, then, children, good and bad angels ; angels who have persevered in justice and holiness, and others who have fallen away from their original state of justice and innocence. The chief of the bad angels is named Lucifer, as we have already said. The first among the good angels is called Michael, a word signifying, *Who is like to God?* And he is so named because this was his rallying cry, when he opposed the rebel angels.

Q Did God punish in any other way the angels who rebelled ?

A. Yes ; He condemned them to hell, a place of eternal torments.

3. The wicked angels had no sooner revolted against God, than a severe punishment followed. They had scarcely sinned, when, as we said before, their place was no longer found in heaven. They were cast out of Paradise and precipitated into the fires of hell, there to suffer " eternal torments !" These are the haughty and rebellious spirits, which are now called the demons, or *angels of darkness*, because their habitation is *a place of darkness*, " where everlasting horror dwells ", and in which

there shall be for ever "wailing and gnashing of teeth". Ah, dear children, what a frightful sin is pride! Angels, beautiful, bright, and glorious, were through "pride", transformed into devils. All the glory and splendour of those sublime intelligences were obscured and changed into horrible ugliness. "I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven", said Jesus Christ to His disciples, when they appeared to glory in the great wonders wrought by them. What a fall! what degradation! Into that abyss will fall, too, every proud man, if he become not humble and not perform penance for his pride. The rebel angels have never done penance; and in the flames of hell they ever shall suffer. Ah, how we should tremble at their fate! Let us learn to be docile and humble, that we may never be cast down into hell with the bad angels.

Q. Why did God make hell?

A. To punish the devils, or bad angels.

4. We are now, children, about to enter on a subject enough to affright the most hardened sinner. We are now entering upon the sad subject of hell, and its excruciating pains and eternal torments. Oh, what an alarming consideration! Hell has been made by God, as your catechism tells you: "to punish the devils or bad angels". Before the angels rebelled there was no hell; it was only when they revolted against God, that hell was made to punish Lucifer with all who took part with him in his mad rebellion against his Creator. In that gulf of endless woe they have been confined ever since, and will for ever there pay the penalty of their treason. Yet though the "devils or bad angels" are unhappy, and will be so for endless ages, and though they were cast down into the fiery abyss, at the very moment

they rebelled against God, they are not all chained down in that place.

5. A great number of them are allowed—God Himself tells us so—to go through the world, and roam through the air. It is for this reason that St. Paul calls them the “powers of air”. Carrying their hell everywhere with them, they every moment strive to tempt and seduce us from the duty which we owe to God. They are always prowling about us, seeking every occasion by their wiles and artifices to lead us into sin. No sooner do they see a good thought arise in our minds than they endeavour to stifle it. They are our real enemies, enemies bent on our destruction, mighty and powerful enemies. Yet, despite their fury and rage, they cannot injure us without our own permission. If God allows them to “go about seeking all whom they may devour”, yet He gives us every grace necessary to resist their attacks, and if we watch and pray and frequent the sacraments, we shall triumph over their malice. If we ever yield to the suggestions of the devil, it will be through our own fault, for Jesus Christ has furnished us with heavenly weapons that we may fight on the right and left against the enemies of our salvation. As the devils are continually about us, and bent on our ruin, let us always walk with prudence and circumspection, and have a constant watch over ourselves, that we be not taken in the snares which they have set for us.

Q. What is hell?

A. Hell is a place where God shall never be seen, and where eternal torments shall be suffered.

6. The Latin word *infernus*, from which the word hell is derived, means, in general, a deep underground place removed from every eye. The place where the just souls who died before the coming of

Christ, and into which Christ descended after His death, is called in the Scriptures hell. "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell", we read in the book of Psalms, and by the word hell in that passage is meant Limbo. But hell, in the ordinary signification of the word, means the place where the damned are tormented, and it is in this latter sense that we are now to understand it. It is very likely that hell is situated in the centre of the earth, but that we cannot say with certainty. St. Augustin, in his book of the *City of God*, says that no person can know where hell is, at least that its situation has not been revealed by God. A great many writers have asserted that volcanoes and other burning gulfs are so many mouths leading to hell, but the Church has not pronounced anything on the subject.

7. Hell, children, is a *horrible place*—a place where are found woes, pains, and miseries without number. No order, no repose, is to be found there, for it is a land of darkness, trouble, and confusion, where, on every side, are heard wild cries of rage and despair. Hell is called in Scripture, at one time, "the bottomless pit", on account of its great depth; at another time, "the great press of the wrath of God", on account of its great extent; again, "the pool burning with fire and brimstone, and the furnace of fire".* The unhappy victims of this fire are called the damned or reprobate. *Reprobate* means one rejected and accursed by God; *damned*—a word derived from the Latin word *damnum*—means *loss*; and is applied to the unhappy inmates of hell, because they have lost God for all eternity.*

Q. Is it certain that there is a hell?

A. Yes; faith tells us so, and reason convinces us of the existence of it.

* *Apocalypse of St. John.*

8. There is no truth more clearly announced in Scripture than the existence of hell. "The way of sinners", says Ecclesiasticus, "is made plain with stones, and in their end is *hell*". "And the rich man died, and he was buried in *hell*", we read in the Gospel of St. Luke. Many other like passages on this subject are to be found both in the Old and New Testament. "Go, ye accursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels", says our Lord, as related by St. Matthew. A hell there is; we must believe in it, or renounce Jesus Christ and His Gospel. That there is such a place as hell, we can show, too, from reason. We know that there is a God—a God of justice, holiness, and truth—but as there is a just God, there must be a hell. Both truths are so connected that one follows necessarily from the other. A God of justice cannot treat in the same way one who faithfully observes His commandments, and one who habitually violates them; for, being a just God, He must hate sin, and punish it. But it is quite clear that all crimes are not punished in this life, but, on the contrary, that vice is often rewarded; there must be, then, after this life, some place where God's justice shall be exercised, and where crime shall be punished.†

9. "There are some", says St. John Chrysostom, "who, given up altogether to sensual desires, live only for the present time, and flatter themselves with the idea of no future punishment. Their great argument is, that God is too good to chastise persons so severely after death. Yes, surely, God is good, but He is, at the same time, just. But what would become of the justice of God if persons could, with impunity, outrage His majesty, despise His love, contemn His benefits, set at nought His warnings, and brave His menaces? If an offence be committed against any individual here below, no matter to what

class or rank he belongs, human justice immediately takes cognizance of the offence and punishes it. And is it only when God, on whom we depend for everything, to whom we are indebted for everything we have and are, is it only when He is outraged and insulted that the offence must be overlooked, and that its punishment would be inconsistent with goodness and mercy ?

10. God is good, you say. Yes, He is ; but is it because He is good He should not inflict punishment ? Who are you that hold such language ? What ! You sin, and you are unwilling to receive punishment ! Has not Almighty God forewarned you of the danger ? Has He not told you beforehand what you are to expect if you die in your sins ? Has He not told you, over and over, that all the workers of iniquity will suffer hereafter ? Has He not whispered to you in secret that, if you did not forsake your evil ways, destruction and misery would be yours ? Again, if punishment is not to be apprehended after death, what is to restrain the perverse and wicked ? If even now the fear of hell is not able to turn them aside from crime, what would their lives be if this salutary check were removed ?

11. The belief in the existence of hell can be traced as far back as the infancy of the world, and it prevails far and wide in every part of the globe ; even the benighted savages are not altogether ignorant of hell and its punishments. "A belief in the existence of hell", again says St. John Chrysostom, "has prevailed in the midst of pagan darkness. Read over the works of the pagan poets, orators, and philosophers, and you will everywhere find mention made of a blessed happy land for the good and virtuous, and a place of punishment for the wicked after death. In their works mention is made of Tartarus, with its infernal rivers, and the various punishments which those

must undergo who have been banished to that lower region. The pagan poets give a beautiful description of the Elysian fields, where virtuous souls after death enjoy pleasures and delights pure, temperate, and refined. This belief in a future life, where the good will be rewarded and the wicked punished, flows from the principles of reason and justice".

Q. How can we know with certainty what passes in hell, as no one has returned from it ?

A. We know it on the authority of God Himself.

12. This objection is not new. It was made in St. John Chrysostom's time, as it is in ours. In his homily on St. Matthew, we read : " If any one asks you, who has returned from the other world to tell us what passes there, answer : it is not on the word of an angel, or on that of a man, that we believe in the pains and sufferings of hell ; but we believe that hell is a place of intense suffering on the word of the Lord of angels and men, who has in His own person given us a clear statement of what is there endured. What stronger evidence can you have on such a subject than the word of the Judge Himself, to whom we shall all have to render an account of our lives, and who will reward or punish us according to our deserts ? And does He not speak of hell as the place ' where the worm never dieth, and the fire is never extinguished ' ? " " You would wish to see some one who returned from the other life ", says the same holy doctor, " to give you an account of what passes there ? You would, indeed ! Restrain your curiosity—listen to the recital given you by the unhappy *rich man*, mentioned by Jesus Christ—hear the frightful details of his anguish and sufferings. In him you have a preacher from hell : ' Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of

his finger in water to cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. . . . And he said: Father, I beseech thee, that thou wouldest send him (Lazarus) to my father's house, for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torments. And Abraham said unto him: They have Moses and the prophets; if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they believe if one rise again from the dead' (*Luke, xvi.*)". *Who has come from the other world to tell us what passes there?* We certainly are not inclined to believe all the stories told about *spirits*, but yet we are convinced that there are some sufficiently authenticated, and which can defy the most minute and severe criticism. And of those who, as it is said, returned from the other world, there were many from hell, and their account of what passed there confirms what our faith has already taught us—that hell is a frightful abode of cries and lamentations, of weeping and gnashing of teeth, of unceasing groanings and never-ending howlings; that it is a glowing furnace from which whirlpools of devouring flame rush through gloom, without in any way removing the darkness of the eternal night which reigns in that place of chastisement. This is the description which they give us of hell.*

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE MONASTERY COOK, AND HIS THOUGHT OF HELL.

* St. John Climacus having paid a visit to a celebrated monastery in Egypt, which contained three hundred and thirty monks, was particularly struck with the piety of the

* In a subsequent chapter, we shall treat of the question regarding *spirits*.

cook. As he saw him always recollect and bathed in tears in the midst of his occupation, he asked him what were the means to which he had recourse to maintain his soul in a state of recollection and compunction. "When I wait on the monks", replied the good religious, "I consider that I am not serving men, but God Himself in the person of His servants; and the view of this fire continually burning before my eyes recalls to my mind those flames in which sinners will burn for an eternity".—*Godescard's Life of the Saint.*

ST TERESA'S VISION OF HELL.

† "As I was one day", says the saint, "in prayer, on a sudden I found myself in hell; I know not how I was carried thither; only I understood that our Lord was pleased that I should see the place which the devils had prepared for me there, and which I had deserved by my sins. What passed here with me lasted but a very short while; yet, if I should live many years, I do not believe I should ever forget it. The entrance appeared to me to resemble that of an oven, very low, very narrow, and very dark. The ground seemed like mire, exceedingly filthy, stinking, insupportable, and full of a multitude of loathsome vermin. At the end of it there was a certain hollow place, as if it had been a kind of a little press, in a wall, into which I had found myself thrust, and closely bent up. I felt my soul burning in so dismal a fire, that I am not able to describe it. I have experienced the most insupportable pains, in the judgment of physicians, which can be corporally endured in this world; but all these were nothing in comparison with what I suffered there, joined to the horrid thought that this was to be without end or intermission for ever. Now, as to that interior fire and unspeakable despair which come in to complete so many horrid torments, I own I am not able to describe them. In so frightful a place there was no room for the least hope of comfort; there was no such thing as even sitting or lying down; I was thrust into a hole in the wall; and those horrible walls close in upon the poor prisoners, and press and stifle them. There was nothing but thick darkness, without any mixture of light, and yet I know not how it is, though there be no light there, yet one sees all that may be most mortifying to the sight. Although it is about six years since this happened, which I here relate, I am even now, in writing of it, so terrified, that my blood chills in my veins: so that whatsoever evils or pains I now suffer, if I do but call

to my remembrance what I then endured, all that can be suffered here appears to me to be just nothing.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What induced Lucifer and his followers to rebel against God?
2. Did they meet with opposition from the other angels?
3. What was the consequence of their rebellion?
4. Was hell in existence before the rebellion of the angels?
5. Are the devils and fallen angels in any other place than hell?
6. Where is hell? What is hell called in Scripture? Who are its victims?
7. Why is hell called the bottomless pit, and the press of the wrath of God?
8. How can we be certain that there is such a place as hell?
9. What are the words of St. John Chrysostom on the subject?
10. As God is so good, why should He punish us in hell?
11. Had the existence of hell been generally believed?
12. As no one has returned from hell, why should we believe in it?

PRACTICE.

1. Firmly believe in the great truth of hell, and often make an act of faith in it, saying: *My God, I believe in hell, because you have revealed that terrible truth.*
2. Resolve at once never to commit a mortal sin, for mortal sin infallibly leads to hell.
3. Frequently repeat these words of our Lord: *Where the tree falls, there it shall lie.* If you die in sin hell will be your abode for ever.

PRAYER.

O hell! O alarming truth which has now been announced to us! We give Thee thanks, O Lord! for the salutary impressions which this subject has made on us. Why is it that we have not seriously reflected on the subject hitherto? We, are every day sporting on the brink of the eternal abyss

without the slightest fear or alarm ! We are every moment liable to fall into it, and yet we are tranquil ! O Lord ! pardon our past sloth and indifference, we are now fully alive to the terrors of hell, and in future we shall, from time to time, recall to our minds the remembrance of it, that we may escape its devouring flames hereafter. Amen.

CHAPTER X V.

ON HELL.

Q. Are any others condemned to hell beside the devils or bad angels ?

A. Yes ; all who die enemies to God ; that is, all who die in the state of mortal sin.

1. Together with the devils, or bad angels, "all who die in the state of mortal sin" are at once cast into hell, to be tormented there, day and night, for all eternity. *One single* mortal sin, if not confessed with sincerity and sorrow before death, is enough to damn us, because one mortal sin kills the soul and makes us enemies of God, and so deserving of hell. If, then, dear children, you unfortunately have fallen into mortal sin by cursing, or committing an impure action, or consenting to an immodest thought, or saddening your parents very much ; and if you died without having done penance for that sin, you would be condemned to hell, and for all eternity you would become the companion of all the "bad angels" in that place of wo where are always heard "weeping and gnashing of teeth". Ah ! if you often thought of this, you would never commit a mortal sin ; *remember your last end, and you shall never sin.* When you are tempted to sin say : If I commit this sin hell

will be my portion, and the devils will be my companions for eternity. Think often; think upon hell now, if you wish not to be tormented there hereafter.

Q. Of what nature are the torments of hell?

A. The torments of hell consist in the pain of loss, and the pain of sense.

2. The first and the greatest torment of hell, called the pain of *loss*, is the *eternal separation of the soul from God*. That is the most dreadful torment that the soul suffers—torment far and away beyond the most rigorous punishment that could be inflicted on us in this world. Nothing less than the possession of God can satisfy the soul of man, for there is in man an increasing and irresistible longing for true happiness. Our hearts are made for God, the source of all happiness; and nothing less than He can satisfy the boundless capacity of our souls. We are not sensible of this, whilst we are partaking of the pleasures of this life; for, taken up with worldly and sensual pursuits, we lose sight of Him from whom all good flows. But after death, when loosened from the chains of mortality, and separated from every object to which they had been attached during life, the damned shall then find and feel, from woful experience, that God alone is their sovereign, their only good, and that nothing less than He can satisfy and content their hearts. They shall then be racked with the most thirsty desire of possessing God; their souls will be tending continually towards the only centre of their repose; but God will repel them with indignation, and banish them for ever from His presence. They shall then feel that God, their chief and only good, is eternally lost to them. *Go, ye cursed, go!* You have abandoned your God during life, and now

God abandons you ; you shall never enjoy My presence ; you will for ever be separated from Me by an immense gulf, over which you can never pass. Now, "know and see how bitter a thing it is for thee to have left the Lord thy God" (*Jer.*, xi. 19).

3. Too well the wretched sinner now understands the casting away of the Lord his God ! I have lost God, the poor condemned soul will say ; I have lost God, and have lost Him for ever. I have lost Him through my own fault ; for a pleasure that lasted only for a moment I have lost Him ! Never more shall I behold Him ; my eyes shall never be gladdened by the sight of Him. An eternal separation has taken place between God and me ! Lost to me for ever, ever, ever ! Oh, what a thought ! what a reflection during an eternity ! This feeling of despair it is that Jesus Christ alludes to in the Gospel of St. Mark, where He says that in hell "the worm never dieth, and the fire is never extinguished". The worm of conscience shall never give rest or peace to the guilty soul, but for ever shall be gnawing it. Of all torments, the most insupportable is the reflection that *the sight of God you shall never behold* ; of all punishments it is the most frightful, and of all woes it is the heaviest. All the saints have told us so. The thought of having lost the kingdom of heaven is, says St. John Chrysostom, a thousand times a more rigorous torment than that caused by the action of devouring flames.

4. In order to know fully the misery of being deprived of the kingdom of heaven, we should first be in a position to comprehend the happiness of those who enjoy heaven. Whilst we are in the flesh, we can never clearly understand what it is to lose God ; but when we have thrown off the bands of mortality, and when the vision of the soul will be clear and unimpeded by any earthly obstruction, then will we see

the great extent of the loss of God ; then we shall see what is meant by being separated for an eternity from Him who is our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. "The rich man tormented in hell", says St. Peter Chrysologus, "is more racked by the image ever present to him of the happiness from which he has fallen, than by the sufferings of the fire in which he burns. Heaven burns him more than hell does. The greatest torment he endures, the most active flame which consumes him, is the view of the happiness enjoyed in heaven by those whom he formerly despised". Yes ; a comparison between the state of the blessed and his own, will rack and torment the damned soul. The saints happy in the enjoyment of their God, and he removed at such an immeasurable distance from that felicity, in the company of devils, a sharer of their rage and despair ! If in this world jealousy at another's happiness causes such sharp, tormenting pain, what will it be in hell, where everything around will add to its sting ? O God, what suffering ! But this is not all. To the fire burning within will be added a raging fire without.

5. The second torment of hell, called the pain of sense, is a raging fire, kindled by an angry God, and which shall never be extinguished. "At the end of the world", our Saviour says, "the Son of Man shall send His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all scandals, and them that work iniquity, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (*Matth.*, xiii. 40). In the midst of this furnace of fire the damned souls shall be engulfed. They shall no longer see, no longer feel, no longer breathe anything but fire. A glowing fire shall on every side encompass those wretched beings. "Which of you", cries out the prophet Isaias, "can dwell with devouring fire, and with everlasting burnings ?" The portion of

those who have died in impenitence is, says St. John, in his *Apocalypse*, a “pool of fire and brimstone”, whose burning waves shall break over the heads of the damned in their deep caverns, and, rising again into mountains of flame, shall rush back with dreadful roarings. Hell, then, is a place of inextinguishable fire. But what is the nature, what are the properties of this fire? It is a fire that burns its victims, and at the same time preserves them; which devours without consuming them; a fire which *communicates to the reprobate an immortal life, and inflicts on them a preservative punishment.** By its peculiar action it repairs while it destroys, and leaves entire what it devours, like to salt, which preserves the meats into which its saline particles enter, from corruption. “All”, says Jesus Christ, “shall be salted with fire” (*Mark*, ix. 48). It has a peculiar torment for every vice. It debases the proud and vainglorious; it oppresses gluttons and drunkards with an insupportable hunger and thirst. The impure feel its filthy, fetid vapours. To each one it metes out the just punishment due to his crimes.*

6. In this fire every sense will be tormented. The sight will be tormented by the view of everything around. No sun, no moon, no stars, ever appear in that gloomy region; but a dismal night reigns eternally there, a night that knows no morning, nor ever expects a return of the day. Though no light can ever penetrate in that deep and bottomless pit, though the very fire that rages there is black and darksome, yet it will afford a light by which can be seen everything that can increase the misery of the damned souls. He will see around him monsters of impiety and irreligion. He will see there crowds of cursers, swearers, and blasphemers. He will see there the im-

* Cassiodorus.

pure, drunkards, murderers, and a multitude of impenitent sinners like himself. Such, children, will be your companions for all eternity, if, by a wicked life, you shall be condemned to that frightful dungeon. The *sense of hearing* will have, too, its peculiar torment. Eternal howlings and yellings; eternal shrieks and groans; eternal curses and blasphemies; eternal cries of rage and despair, mingled with the insulting shouts of the tormenting devils and the lashes of their scourges. In that place shall be heard the unhappy partners of crime tearing, tormenting, and loading each other with bitter reproaches. They look on each other no longer as fathers, children, brothers, sisters, friends, and protectors; but are so many hideous spirits, eternally chained down together by those black fiery links, which, by their crimes and lusts, they had in their lifetime forged for themselves. There the father curses and reproaches the son; and the son curses the father; the mother curses the daughter; and the daughter the mother. Brother lifts up his hands against brother, friend against friend, accomplice against accomplice, companion against companion. All past ties are snapped asunder; former love is forgotten, and now there only prevails one wild, fierce, raging war.

7. *Remorse* and despair, "the worm that never dies", like a vulture, shall for ever fasten itself upon their breasts, shall continually gnaw and eat its way into them, and prey upon their souls. Oh, who can conceive this greatest of all torments, this eternal remorse, this dismal melancholy! Oh, the racking torture of thinking for ever and ever on the folly and madness of losing, through their own fault, the eternal delights of heaven, which they might have so easily enjoyed! I have lost God, the condemned one will say, I have lost God, and never again shall behold Him! I have lost heaven, and shall never

enter it! I am now banished from heaven, I am now rejected by my Creator, and that through my own fault! Every means of arriving at heaven were placed within my reach. Christ Jesus died for me; He willingly spilled for me on the cross every drop of His own pure precious blood. I was baptized and brought up in the true Church. During my days on earth, what helps and graces have not been bestowed upon me? I had Christian parents, who gave me a virtuous education, and brought me up in the fear and love of God. As I advanced in years, I received many salutary instructions, many a good and wholesome advice had been given me, by the priest of God. I was often warned against the dangerous course I was running. I was told that hell would be my portion, if I did not change my life. But I abused all these means of salvation; I broke through every law; I disregarded every advice; I turned a deaf ear to the remonstrances of my parents and of my best friends—the priests of God. The pulpit, the altar is now clearly before my mind, and I now recollect, with sadness and sorrow, the warnings and admonitions given me from them.

8. Ah! I well now recollect how, on hearing a discourse on hell, I suppressed the good desires that sprung up in my mind, and stifled the voice of conscience when it smote me for the sinful career I was running. Yes, then I hushed the voice of conscience, and endeavoured to persuade myself that hell was not so frightful a place as the priest represented it. But now, from sad experience, I find that the description then given of it falls immeasurably below the sad reality. Hell not so bad as described! Ah, misery, misery, I am lost for ever! I will never see the face of God! Lost, lost for an eternity, and that through my own fault! I had it in my power to be saved. When I fell into sin, the sacraments

were at hand to restore me to the grace of God, and to strengthen and aid me in my journey through life, but I neglected and despised them, and I am now damned! Dreadful thought! Agonizing reflection! God lost for ever! All is now over with me; my doom is pronounced; my lot is fixed; my misery is endless, and without resource. There is a God, and I shall never see Him; there is a heaven, and I shall never enter it! There is a happiness, and I shall never enjoy it! Never and always! Ah, the thought! Never mercy, never light, never hope! Always in tears, always in sorrow, always in suffering, always in anguish, always in despair! My body pained, my mind tortured, my brain racked, and all this never to end! Eternity, eternity, eternity!

9. At this thought the poor damned soul, abandoned by God, disappointed of every hope, without remedy, without resource, gives himself up to all the horrors of despair, and in his fury, and in his rage, turns his arms against himself. He curses his fate, he would destroy himself if he could; and as he cannot, he raises his voice against God Himself, and flings forth from his burning throat, curses, imprecations, and blasphemies against the Almighty. Revengeful God, he cries out, do Thy worst! burn me more and more, I care not for Thee! if Thou wilt, collect all Thy torments on my head! Then the current of his mind runs in another direction. Sadness and melancholy for a moment take the place of violence and rage. Ah! wo, wo! Burning here for endless ages! never to be released! Never! Why was I created? Cursed be the mother that bore me! Cursed be the day on which I first saw the light! Cursed be the air I breathed! Cursed be the life I led! Cursed be all and every one that had a hand in my damnation! Cursed be God, and cursed be man! Oh, children! what a frightful state

is that of a damned soul! What a frightful place is hell then! And will any of you be ever condemned to suffer in that terrible dungeon? If you avoid sin and serve God during life, you will not; but if you die in mortal sin, your state hereafter will be like to that poor soul that you have now heard described.†

Q. Can any one come out of hell?

A. No; *out of hell there is no redemption.*

10. The torments of hell are eternal—that is, they will never have an end. This is an article of our faith of which no Catholic can for a moment entertain a doubt. The Scriptures are clear and precise on this subject. “The wicked”, says Jesus Christ, “shall go into *everlasting* punishment, but the just into life *everlasting*” (*Matt.*, xxv. 46). And on the last day He shall pass this terrible sentence on the damned. “*Go, ye accursed, into everlasting fire*”. The fire of hell will never be extinguished, the holy Fathers tell us, but its smoke shall ascend for ever and ever. The damned shall burn for endless ages in the midst of its flames, and the flames which devour them shall never go out. Years will pass on; ages will glide away; the sun will a thousand times begin and end its course; kingdoms will a thousand times rise and fall; but hell will know no change; its suffering and torments will go on, on, on, and never, never have an end. The damned will for ever send forth their cries, groans, and sighs, but God will never be moved by their tears and supplications. God will never be appeased, His justice will never be satisfied. When millions of years and millions of ages shall have passed by, God will be still deaf to the voice of the condemned soul. A wall of separation shall for ever rise up between God and it. An immense chaos will for ever be spread between God and the soul. The

wicked one will for ever lift up his eyes, but he shall not see God ; he shall for ever send forth sighs, but Jesus shall not hear him ; he shall call upon his Creator and Redeemer, but shall never find relief.

11. And after as many thousand ages as there are sands on the sea-shore, and after as many millions of years as there are drops of water in the mighty ocean, the condemned sinner will not then be released from his bed of fire, but must suffer on for as many millions of years again. This, dear children, is a frightful thought ! Oh ! what joy there would be in hell, if a hope were held out to its wretched victims that some time or other they would be set free. If an Angel were sent to them by God, to tell them that the justice of God would be satisfied when they should have remained in hell for as long a time as it would take a little bird to level all the mountains in the world by removing once every thousand years a small grain of earth in its bill, oh, what joy and gladness would reign around ! What praises to God for His great mercy ! How the poor souls would congratulate each other at the prospect of being released at that remote period—a period so remote, and comprising so many years, that it appears to you that it could never have an end. But no such promise will be ever made to them. In their ears will be continually ringing the terrific word—*Eternity ! Eternity ! Eternity !* Always in suffering ! always burning ! always devoured by regret and despair ! Never to behold God, nor His saints, nor parents, nor friends ! *Always ! Never !* Yes ! the damned one feels that the gates of the heavenly city will be for ever closed against him ; that he can never o'erstep the gulf by which he is separated from God. When millions of ages shall have rolled on, and again millions of ages, he knows that even then his pains will recommence.

Shall we, children, be of the number of those who will suffer for ever the torments of hell? Perhaps there are some among you who will one day become the prey of eternal flames! O alarming perhaps! O frightful possibility! O the sad state of man in this world! By abusing his liberty, and resisting grace, he can damn himself for ever! Oh, how comes it that one could ever commit a mortal sin!

12. That you may have some idea, a very faint one indeed, of the anguish of a damned soul at the thought of eternity, let me suppose that you have been convicted of murder, and that your last night in this world has arrived. To your narrow cell word is brought that you must be ready at six o'clock in the morning to mount the scaffold, and there to be suspended from it by a rope until life is extinct. The clock strikes the midnight hour! and how dismally, and how mournfully, does every stroke of the twelve sound in your ears! Soon strikes one, then two, and then three. Life flows on as the implacable hand turns on the dial. Six o'clock now arrives, and your prison door creaks on its hinges. You must away at once to the scaffold in readiness for you! Oh, the anguish and despair of that moment, when all hope is over. But if such be the last night of the murderer, what must be the first night—if first night it can be called—of the damned one in hell! He died, let me suppose, in a state of drunkenness. His soul was at once torn from his miserable body, and was cast into the gulf of hell—into the region of never-ending torments. It endeavours to ascend from the bottomless pit; it endeavours to find out some passage by which it can escape. But on every side it meets eternal justice crying out—*Pass not hence!* Then it falls into a state of frightful agitation and despair; and now it appeals to hope, and hope makes it no answer. The balance of divine justice alone

answers it, and answers it in these words—**ALWAYS ! FOR EVER ! ETERNITY !†**

Q. Does it not appear unjust to punish sin, which is the action of a moment, with eternal torments ?

A. There is no injustice in punishing mortal sin with eternal torments.

13. In the first place, who can say that sin is the action of only a moment ? Even though it were, it contains infinite malice, on account of the infinite dignity of the person of God, who is offended by it, and therefore deserves an infinite punishment. A stab given to a king with the intention of killing him, is only the action of a moment, and yet it is punished with confiscations, tortures, and death, which, as far as this life is concerned, is a sort of infinite punishment. But what, if the sin itself, in those who die guilty of it, should be eternal ? And it is so. For the guilt of sin lies not exactly in the outward action, which is indeed but the action of a moment, but it lies in the malice of the will of the sinner who commits it. But as long as the sin is unrepented of, so long does the will adhere to it, and continue, as it were, in the virtual commission of it ; because all that time it continues averted from God, and it adheres to that sinful action by which God is offended. Now it is quite clear that as long as a sinner continues in that state he deserves punishment ; and if he dies in that state he deserves punishment for all eternity, for after this life there can be no repentance, and so the state of mortal sin in which the sinner dies shall for ever remain unchanged.

Q. How did God reward the angels who remained faithful ?

A. He confirmed them for ever in glory.

14. The Angels who remained faithful to God, and who persevered in that state of grace and holiness in which they had been created, were, as a reward for their fidelity, "confirmed for ever" in grace and glory; that is, without destroying their liberty, their wills have been so permanently fixed in the love of good, that they are now incapable of sinning, and so of forfeiting their original holiness and justice. The happiness which they enjoy is perfect happiness, a happiness of which they can never be deprived, but which they shall enjoy for all eternity. On account of that happiness, which consists in seeing and enjoying God for ever, they are called *blessed spirits*.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE BURNING MOUNTAIN AND THEODORIC.

* St. Gregory says: "There was a very wicked and cruel king. His name was Theodoric. He lived in a town called Ravenna. At the same time there was a holy Pope called John living in Rome. One day this holy Pope went to the town where Theodoric, the cruel king, was living. When Theodoric heard that the Pope was come, he had him put into prison. He gave him very little to eat, and was very cruel to him. In a few days the good Pope died in the prison. Very soon after Theodoric had killed the Pope, he killed another good man called Symmachus. Soon after this the cruel king Theodoric died himself. You will see how God punished him. There is a little island called Stromboli, with water all round it. On this island there is a great mountain. Fire is often seen coming out of the top of this mountain. At that time there was a holy hermit living on the island in a little cell or room. On the night that cruel king Theodoric died, it happened that the hermit was looking out of his window. He saw three persons near the top of the fiery mountain. They were persons who were dead; but he had seen them all before, so he knew who they were. There was Theodoric, the cruel king, who had died that night. The other two were Pope John and Symmachus, who had been unjustly

killed by Theodoric. He saw that Theodoric was in the middle, betwixt the other two. When they came to that place from which the fire was proceeding, he saw Theodoric leave the other two, and go down into the fiery mountain. So", says St. Gregory, "those who had seen the cruel king's injustice saw also his punishment".

THE GATES OF HELL

+ St. Frances of Rome lived a very holy life. Many times she saw with her eyes her Angel Guardian at her side. It pleased the Almighty God to let her see many other wonderful things. *Brev. Rom.* One afternoon the Angel Gabriel came to take her to see hell. She went with him, and saw that terrible place. Let us follow in her footsteps, that we may see in spirit the wonderful things which she saw. Our journey is through the deep dark places under the earth. Now we will set off. We pass through hundreds and hundreds of miles of darkness. Now we are coming near the terrible place. See, there are the gates of hell ! When St. Frances came to the gates of hell, she read on them these words, written in letters of fire : " This is Hell, where there is neither rest, nor consolation, nor hope". Look, then, at those tremendous gates in front of you. How large they are. Measure, if you can, the length and breadth, the height and depth of the terrible gates (*Is., v.*) . " Therefore hath Hell opened her mouth without any bound. Their strong ones, and their people, and their glorious ones go down into it"

FATHER BRYDAYNE'S THOUGHT OF ETERNITY.

‡ Father Brydayne, a celebrated missionary, was distinguished for great popular eloquence. Preaching one day on death, he asked in deep thrilling tones . " On what, dear brethren, do you rest your hopes that your last moment is so far remote ? Is it on your youth ? Yes, you answer, I am not yet twenty, thirty years old. Ah ! deceive not yourselves thus. You know not the day nor the moment that you will be called out of life ; and if you are taken away by death in the state of sin, a miserable eternity will be yours. But, do you know what eternity means ? It is a pendulum, every forward and backward motion of which repeats, in the silence of the tombs, these two words . Always ! For ever ! For ever ! Always ! Always ! Whilst time is running on, one condemned soul cries out . *What o'clock is it ?* but he is answered by another : *Eternity*".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Who are those that are condemned to hell, and for what cause?
2. What is the greatest torment endured by the damned souls?
3. What are the reflections of the damned in hell?
4. Is the happiness of others a source of torment to the damned?
5. What is the instrument of torture in hell?
6. Will each of the senses have its peculiar torment in hell?
7. Will the recollection of past graces torment the soul?
8. Will the condemned souls have a recollection of the instructions given them?
9. Describe the soul under the horrors of despair.
10. Shall the damned burn for ever in hell?
11. Will the soul be not released after millions of ages?
12. Give a familiar illustration of the anguish of the soul in hell.
13. Why is it that a single mortal sin is so severely punished?
14. What do you mean by saying that the angels are confirmed in glory?

PRACTICE.

1. When you are tempted to sin, say to yourself: can I endure the eternal torments of hell?
2. Pray unceasingly to the Lord to support you on the brink of this frightful precipice, and to deliver you from eternal death. *From everlasting death, deliver us, O Lord!*
3. Let the eternity of hell's torments be ever present to your mind, that you may conceive a horror of sin.

PRAYER.

Behold, O God! a wretched sinner prostrate at Thy feet, one who, for many years past, has deserved to dwell in hell without further hope of salvation. I thank Thee, my Redeemer, for your great patience in bearing with me so long. I now sincerely repent of having offended Thy infinite goodness. From this very moment I will labour to gain your love. I will renounce for evermore sin and all the occasions of it. I will have ever before my eyes the alarming truth of

hell. Do Thou, O God, extend Thy hand, and preserve me from falling into the eternal abyss. Holy Virgin, Refuge of sinners, pray for us. Amen.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PUNISHMENT OF OUR FIRST PARENTS.

Q. How did God punish the disobedience of our first parents?

A. They were driven out of Paradise, stript of original justice and innocence, and condemned to death with their posterity.

1. Adam and Eve had no sooner transgressed the command of God, by eating the forbidden fruit, than their eyes were opened to the wretched state to which they had brought themselves. They soon found out, to their sorrow, what it was they had done. The fruit of the tree of the *knowledge of good and evil* gave them light only to see their sad and miserable plight. Guilt produces shame, and they now blush at what they had not observed before. They make a covering for themselves of the leaves of the trees. Heavenly grace has been forfeited, and their innocence and peace of mind destroyed. The garden appears to them changed from what it was ; no longer does it present a beautiful appearance. The thought of what they had done follows them wherever they go, and everything they look upon seems to wear the hue of guilt. Oh ! what would they not now give if they could undo the fatal deed ! What had hitherto been their joy began to alarm and terrify them ; they heard the voice of God walking in the garden ; it was no longer the voice of gladness—it was a sound

of terror in their ears. They ran off, and, trembling with fear, hid themselves among the thickest of the trees. But God called Adam by name, and asked him, "Where art thou?" "I heard Thy voice in the garden", said Adam, trembling, "and I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself".

2. While Adam was innocent and pure, he did not perceive that he was naked, neither did he blush. The real cause of his fear he did not mention, but he soon found that it was in vain to dissemble with God. "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" said God. "Hast thou eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee not to eat?" Adam, trying to throw the blame off himself, answered, "Eve, whom Thou gavest me for a companion, gave me of the fruit of the tree, and I did eat". God called Eve, and said to her, "Why didst thou do this?" Eve, in like manner, trying to throw the blame off herself, and fix it upon the serpent, said, "The serpent deceived me, and I did eat". God now called the serpent before Him, and cursed him on the spot as the prime promoter of the sin: "Because thou hast done this thing, thou shalt be cursed amongst all the beasts and cattle of the earth, upon thy belly shalt thou go, and earth shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. Of the daughters of Eve one shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel". He then addressed himself to the other two offenders, who stood before Him, and sentenced them both to the most afflicting penalties, which are felt severely to the present day by their posterity.

3. He told the woman, in particular, that He would multiply her sufferings; that, in bringing forth her children, she should groan in pain, and be for ever subject to her husband's power: "Thou shalt have many sorrows with thy children, and thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall be lord over thee". To Adam He said: "Because thou hast

hearkened to the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work ; with labour and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it produce ; and in the sweat of thy brow thou shalt eat bread, until thou return to the earth out of which thou wast taken ; for dust thou art, and into dust shalt thou return". After this, the Lord God made for Adam and Eve clothes of the skins of beasts ; and to make them even more sensible of their folly, He exclaimed, in a tone of irony : " Behold ! Adam is become as one of us, knowing good and evil. Near the tree of life he shall never come, lest he should be for eating also of that fruit, and live for ever". God then sent them out of Paradise. The beautiful garden was no longer to be their abode. A cherubim, with a flaming sword, was placed at the entrance, to prevent their ever returning to it (*Gen.*, iii. x.).

4. Such, children, have been the fatal consequences of the disobedience of our first parents. No sooner did they rebel against their Creator, than the paradise of sweets was changed into a dreary waste, a wilderness of troubles, a vale of sorrows. No sooner had they transgressed God's commands, than they forfeited His friendship, and were " stripped of original justice and innocence ". A total estrangement has taken place between God and them. They are afraid to look at Him ; they fly from Him ; and God looks upon them as undutiful creatures, as rebels, who, forgetful of all His favours, despised His commands, and trampled under foot the orders given them by Him. Indeed they wished to withdraw themselves from God's rule ; they thought, indeed, to become independent, and they fell into the most vile slavery ! The word of the devil it was that they attended to ; he was the master that they listened to. Yes, and henceforth the devil

will be their ruler, to him they will belong. They will be his slaves, and he will exercise his empire over them. Oh, the fatal consequences of sin ! Together with being "stripped of original justice and innocence", they "were condemned to death with their posterity". From the very moment they disobeyed God, they were subject to death: "Thou shalt eat thy bread in the sweat of thy brow, until thou return to the earth from which thou wast taken". What a terrible change was produced by sin in our first parents ! Before their transgression they knew neither pain, sorrow, labour, nor toil ; but once they sinned, they became subject to weariness and grief and sickness, and to death itself, in this world, for their bodies were to be reduced to the dust from which they were made. Let us learn from this sad example, children, that even in this life serving God is man's only happiness, and that all those who stray away from Him by sin *shall perish*.

Q. Did God inflict any other punishment on our first parents ?

A. Yes ; He deprived them of all right to heaven, and of several other blessings intended for them.

5. On account of their disobedience, our first parents became enemies of God, slaves of the devil, and forfeited "all right to heaven". Had they observed the command of God, their life in this world would be a life of happiness, delight, and joy ; their days would glide on in serenity and peace, and when their earthly sojourn would come to a close, without knowing death they would be translated body and soul from the earthly paradise to the heavenly paradise, and there be put in possession of joys still more exquisite, and pleasures never fading. But of the

many "blessings intended for them", they were deprived on account of the sin of disobedience.

Q. What were the chief blessings intended for our first parents?

A. A constant state of happiness if they remained faithful to God.

6. Yes; if our first parents "remained faithful to God", they would be happy for ever. They would enjoy every day the delightful pleasures of paradise. Sickness, sorrow, and grief could never come near them; they would be perfect strangers to trouble, care, and anxiety. Shame or remorse they could never know; an uneasy thought they could never feel; their every wish and desire would be satisfied. Every morning's sun would awake them to a new day, which would be spent in songs of praise, ascending in concert with the warbling of the birds, to the Almighty Creator. And after dwelling for some time in the delightful garden of Eden, they would be removed alive to the eternal mansions of heaven.

Q. Did Adam recover the friendship of God, and die in his love?

A. Yes; Adam did penance for his sin during nine hundred and thirty years.

7. The repentance of Adam is clearly expressed in Scripture: "She preserved him, and she brought him out of his sin" (*Wis.*, x. 2). St. Augustin speaks of the salvation of Adam as an opinion generally adopted. Yet the Church has not publicly celebrated his memory, nor has she ranked him among the saints. However, she has not prevented some particular devotions being paid him. The Greeks have placed Adam and Eve among the just of the Old Law, and honour their memories on the

19th December. They even commemorate, on the 4th February, by a religious mourning, their expulsion from the garden of paradise. Some Latin martyrologies make mention of Adam and Eve on the 24th December.

When Eve died we cannot exactly say, but Adam died when he was nine hundred and thirty years old, and was buried on Calvary, where, in course of time, a chapel was erected to his memory. "The place where the cross of Jesus Christ was erected", says St. Ambrose, "was the spot where Adam had been buried, as the Jews tell us; and, indeed, it was meet that the source of our life should be placed in the very spot where had lain the very origin of our death".* In a sermon on the Passion and death of our Lord, St. Athanasius speaks thus: "The place selected by Jesus Christ, on which He was to suffer and die, was Calvary, which, according to the opinion of the most learned among the Jews, contained the bones of Adam; for they tell us that after his expulsion and condemnation he died and was buried there. But if this be so, the connection of such a place with the cross of Jesus Christ is truly admirable, for it is quite meet that our Lord, coming to seek out and bring back the children of Adam, should select as the scene of His sufferings and death the very place in which Adam had been interred". In St. Basil's time it was the prevailing belief among Christians that Adam was buried in Calvary, and St. Epiphanius tells us that he had read many works in which that belief was attested.

Q. Were we condemned to the same punishment with our first parents?

* The Benedictine Edition of the Works of St. Ambrose, p. 1525.

A. Yes; we were all made partakers of their sin and punishment, as we would be all sharers in their innocence and happiness, if they had been obedient to God (*Rom.*, v. 12).

8. Adam represented and contained, as it were, in himself, the whole human race; the stream of human life was by him polluted in its source. If he had persevered in the obedience which he owed to God, we equally as he would be "sharers" in the happiness promised him; every one of us would be born in that happy state in which Adam had been created. We would never know sickness nor pain; would never feel hunger nor cold, nor experience any inconvenience during our lives. Sorrow and grief would be strangers to us, for we would, during our stay on earth, enjoy every pleasure and delight. We never would die, but after a certain time be taken up alive to heaven. But as Adam represented us all, we, too, were to be made sharers in his sin and punishment if he disobeyed God. If he should forfeit the justice and innocence in which he was created, we, too, were to reap the sad consequences of his transgression. Such was the will of God. Adam having then sinned, we all have sinned in him. He has rendered us all guilty with himself; he has transmitted to all who have descended from him, not only the penalty to which he had been condemned by his sin, but the sin itself.

9. This truth is clearly expressed in many parts of Scripture. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, says: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned" (*Rom.*, v. 12). It has, too, been defined a point of Catholic belief by the Council of Trent in these words: "If any one asserts that the prevari-

cation of Adam injured himself alone, and not his posterity, and that the holiness and justice received of God, which he lost, he lost for himself alone, and not for us also, or that he being defiled by the sin of disobedience, has only transfused death and pains of the body into the whole human race, but not sin also, which is the death of the soul, let him be anathema; whereas he contradicts the Apostle, who says: ‘By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned’” (*Sess. v.*).

10. Again, there can be nothing clearer on this subject than the words of Jesus Christ in His Gospel: “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven”. But what necessity for a second birth, except the first be impure, and renders us all guilty? All men, then, sinned in Adam, not as the physical head of the human race, otherwise we should be guilty of all his sins, but as the moral head, which represented all his children with reference to the observance of that precept, in regard to which God, on account of His supreme dominion over all His creatures, included the wills of all men in the will of Adam.

The Church has always strongly defended this principal article of our faith against all who have impugned it. We all have, then, sinned in Adam; his disobedience has been our disobedience; his fault has been our fault; and the punishment due to his transgression we have been “made partakers of”.

Q. Are all the inhabitants of this world the descendants of Adam and Eve?

A. Yes; Adam and Eve have been the first parents of all mankind.

11. Adam and Eve had children, and these chil-

dren begot others, who again were parents; and so on, from generation to generation, the human race has multiplied, and has been perpetuated to our time. So, then, all the inhabitants of this globe, however they may differ in colour and appearance, have descended from Adam and Eve. The difference in colour and in appearance which the natives of one country present to the natives of another, is to be attributed to climate, peculiar habits, and mode of life. "The great difference between negroes and white people", says Buffon, "would go very far to prove that they were not descended from the same stock, had we not known the cause of the dark colour of many of the inhabitants of this world. The heat of the climate is the principal cause of the black colour of the negroes. Where the heat is excessive, as in Senegal and Guinea, the natives are altogether black. Where the heat is not so intense, as on the eastern coast of Africa, the natives are not so dark; where, again, the heat is less glowing, such as in Barbary, Mogul, Arabia, North America, the natives are merely of a copper colour. In Europe, and a part of Asia, the heat being more temperate, the natives are white. Everything goes to prove that the human race is not composed of races essentially different one from the other; but, on the contrary, that originally there had been but one race, which, having been multiplied and spread over the whole surface of the globe, has undergone various changes, arising from climate, habits, and mode of living".

Q. Can we judge of the inclinations, vices, and virtues of a person by his features?

A. We cannot with any certainty, and we should look on the pretended science of physiognomists, under many respects, as vain and empty.

12. Towards the close of the last century, Lavater, a Swiss preacher, published some works in support of a system, improved, if not invented by him, called *Physiognomy*.* This pretended art consists in determining the mental character of an individual—judging his dispositions, his inclinations, his vices, his virtues, by the examination of his countenance. The art of physiognomy may sometimes lead us into the knowledge of the most striking characteristics of an individual; for when certain feelings and habits are much indulged in, the lineaments of the countenance, which are associated with them, are apt to become permanent. The Sacred Scriptures themselves, as well as experience, teach us that the countenance is the mirror of the soul. But the evil is, that, relying on this art, we go farther than we are warranted. Lavater, or rather some of his disciples, pronounced with certainty, where only a conjecture could be formed. They not only determined the natural dispositions and inclinations of an individual, but they judged of his virtues and vices; as if, indeed, the defects of the mind could not be corrected by reason, education, and particularly by grace.

13. Hence, they opened the door to false suspicions, rash judgments, and groundless imputations. This system should then be exploded, as contrary to charity, justice, and the efficacy of grace, as well as to the liberty of man. For if man's inclinations, his present and future dispositions, his virtues and vices, depend necessarily on the expression of his countenance, he cannot be a free agent. That there are few physiognomists who go so far as this, we readily allow. The greater number of them consider the lines of the face as the effect of virtues or vices, and not the cause of them. They do not say: your

* Word derived from two Greek words, φύσις, nature, and γνωσκω, I know.

countenance presents certain traces more or less prominent; therefore you are subject, and cannot be otherwise than subject, to such a vice and to such a virtue. But they say: I know that you are of a contemplative turn, from your frown and the contraction of your brows; from your sallow and hollow cheeks, I know that you are prone to such and such a vice; from your restless eye, I judge that your mind is ill at ease. Pressed no farther than this, the system of Lavater will not, certainly, favour fatalism or wound free will; but it will, nevertheless, open a gap to groundless suspicions and rash judgments.

14. As a proof that *physiognomy* furnishes us with no certain evidence of the inclinations of any individual, do we not every day see persons of refined minds and delicate feelings, with all the outward appearance of coarseness, and even brutality? In looking over the biography of celebrated characters, we find that persons remarkable for beauty of features and good expression of countenance had been guilty of the most atrocious crimes; and that persons most repulsive in appearance, were remarkable for every virtue. Vigneul Marville, in one of his works, makes mention of two brothers, one of whom (with a most engaging expression of countenance) had become a villain, whilst the other was remarkable for honour, integrity, and other virtues, though a most ill-looking man. Our experience will furnish us with many other examples, affording sufficient evidence that no reliance can be placed on the pretended science of physiognomy. At the close of his life, Lavater had very little faith in his favourite system. There can be no doubt that an individual, no matter what his appearance be, no matter what the expression of his countenance, can, if he pleases, and with the assistance of grace, triumph over every passion, check every evil inclination, and acquire every virtue.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE MARCHIONESS OF BRINVILLIERS, A POISONER.

* The Marchioness of Brinvilliers perpetrated so many murders, that she appeared to have lived only for the destruction of others. She was a notorious poisoner. In 1651, she was married to the Marquis, and formed an improper attachment to St. Croix, a cavalry officer. They then commenced a series of poisonings, the first victim being the Marquis's mother, then his two brothers and his sister. These crimes were not discovered until the death of St. Croix in 1676. The Marchioness fled, but was arrested at Liège, brought to Paris, and executed in 1676. So tranquil and fascinating was her look, that even the clearest evidence of her guilt could scarcely suffice to establish belief in it. Her regular features, her fair and soft complexion, her golden tresses, the clear, deep blue of her eyes, and the remarkable expression of tranquillity which pervaded the whole, irresistibly suggested the idea of innocence.—(See her life by Albert Smith).

BEATRICE CENCI, THE PARRICIDE.

Beatrice, in concert with two of her brothers and Lucretia her mother, accomplished the foul deed of assassinating her father Francesco. Accused and found guilty of the murder, all four perished on the scaffold. This terrible event made a profound impression on the people of Rome, and for many ages the name of Beatrice Cenci was preserved in the popular airs. The death of the Cenci has been the subject for many paintings, of which the most celebrated is in the Colonna Palace, Rome, and was for a long time attributed to Guido Reni. Beatrice was called the "beautiful parricide". Her face was soft and gentle, her features beautifully moulded, an inexpressible tenderness and harmony breathing over them. She was executed on the 11th September, 1599.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What was the consequence of our first parents' transgression ?
2. What excuse did Adam and Eve give God for disobeying Him ?

3. What was the sentence passed by God on Adam and Eve?
4. Did they cease then to be the friends of God, and did they become subject to misery and death?
5. Were our first parents deprived of their right to heaven?
6. If they remained faithful to God, what blessings would they receive?
7. Did Adam do penance for his sin? Where was he buried?
8. Why were we condemned to suffer for Adam's sin?
9. Can you give any proof in support of that doctrine?
10. In what manner have all sinned in Adam?
11. If all the inhabitants of this globe are the descendants of Adam and Eve, how do you account for the difference in race and colour?
12. What do you understand by physiognomy?
13. Is the pretended science of physiognomy at variance with justice and charity?
14. Give some proof that no reliance can be placed on that system.

PRACTICE.

1. Let the punishment of our first parents be always present to your mind, that you may conceive a horror of the sin of disobedience.
2. Often think of the justice of God in punishing so severely one sin, that you may always fear that Divine justice.
3. Be reluctant in judging the character of a person from his external appearance.

PRAYER.

O my God! who art all love, I return you thanks for not abandoning man after his fall. In your great goodness you held out to him a promise of a Redeemer. We have inherited Adam's sin, and we came into this world children of *wrath*, but through Thy loving kindness we have been cleansed from this stain, and if we persevere during life in obedience to Thy laws, a heavenly paradise shall be our reward. Amen.

CHAPTER XVIL

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

Q. How do you call the sin of our first parents?
 A. Original sin.

1. Sin is twofold—original sin and personal
 Personal sin is the sin we ourselves commit, and
 original sin is the sin committed by Adam and Eve,
 and which has been transmitted to us by them, for
 we were all born in it. It is called “original sin”,
 because it was committed by Adam and Eve, our
 origin and “first parents”, and from them has passed
 down to us.

Q. What is original sin?
 A. The sin we inherit from our first parents,
 and in which we are conceived and born *children
 of wrath* (*Ephes.*, ii. 3).

2. “The sin we inherit from our first parents”,
 who were the origin or the beginning of mankind,
 is on that account called “original sin”. Not only
 when we are born, but the very moment we are con-
 ceived in our mother’s womb—at the very instant
 that our souls are united to our bodies, we become
 sullied and infected by that sin, and, on that ac-
 count, too, it is called “original sin”. It is the
 very sin of Adam, inherited by all his posterity,
 which renders us defiled, and makes us “*children of
 wrath*”. The doctrine of original sin has been pro-
 fessed at all times, and inculcated in every age.
 “From the parent of mankind”, says St. Athana-
 sius, “death has been inherited by all his posterity”.
 We have all been conceived in iniquity. The pro-

phet, in saying, "In sin my mother hath conceived me", blames the prevarication of Eve, the mother of the human race, who has enveloped us all in her crime and its punishment. "O lamentable sin of our first parents", cries out St. Ephrem, "into what an abyss of evils hast thou cast us! To-day we are all life and strength; to-morrow we will be in the grave, without sense or motion. Was it in this way, O Adam! that you made your entry into the world? No; your cradle was paradise; but the gloom of the tomb, rottenness, infection, the ignominy of the grave, have taken the place of glory and felicity. O deplorable fall! Contrast deserving of all our tears!" The Councils are as clear and emphatic as the holy fathers on this subject.*

Q. Why is it called original sin?

A. Because it is transmitted to us from our first parents, and we came into the world infected by it; and because it is the origin and source of every evil and misery to us (*Rom.*, v. 12).

3. The sin of our first parents has been "transmitted to us", and to each and every one of their descendants, if we except the blessed Mother of God. In their sin we have all been conceived and born. No sooner has the soul been united to the body, in our mother's womb, than it becomes stained with this sin. How this takes place we cannot tell, for it is a mystery. Incomprehensible though it be, we must, however, believe it, for God has revealed it. God has spoken; He has told us that Adam's sin has been "transmitted to us"; and that at our birth we are infected with it. Notwithstanding the apparent rigour and injustice of that transmission, we must

unhesitatingly believe it, for we have the word of God for its truth. It is called original sin for another reason, and that is, its being "the source of every evil and misery to us". To that sin we are to trace all the evils of life—hunger, thirst, pain of body, anguish of mind, remorse of conscience, famine, wars, pestilence; in a word, all the sufferings of this life, and death itself.

4. God cannot be charged with injustice in depriving us, on account of the transgression of our first parents, of all the advantages of original justice. No; we are *justly* chastised by Him. A king, for example, raises one of his subjects to a dignity to which he has no just claim, and tells him that he and his descendants will always enjoy that dignity, in case he continue faithful to Him. The loyalty of this subject is put to the test; the subject becomes guilty of treason, and at once he is deprived of his dignity, and not only he but all his descendants. Is there any injustice in the proceeding of this king with regard to this subject and his descendants? No; in punishment of his infidelity, he and his posterity have been justly deprived of the possessions and honours which had been bestowed upon him. So, too, God, in depriving the posterity of Adam, on account of his infidelity, of the advantages of original justice, has not acted unjustly, for He owed us nothing.

Q. What other particular effects follow from the sin of our first parents?

A. Our whole nature was corrupted by it; it darkened our understanding, weakened our will, and left in us a strong inclination to evil.

5. As we were all born under the guilt of the sin

of our first parents, and were deprived of that original justice in which they were created, and on this account subjected to the dominion of Satan, "our whole nature" experiences the consequences of it. "The understanding" has been darkened by it. After the fall of our first parents, the mind of man underwent a sad change; the light of his reason became obscured; his knowledge of God became every day more faint; and the blindness of the intellect became such, that man at last forgot the God that created him, and began to pay adoration to the vilest objects. He forgot himself; he lost sight of his grand destiny, and, like the beasts around him, he placed all his happiness in the gratification of his senses. Forgetful of the end of his creation, he wallowed in brutal pleasures, and spent his days in the gratification of every vile passion. Even now, when we are enlightened by faith, how weak is our knowledge of God! how weak is the knowledge of our duties towards Him! how many lessons, how many instructions are required to engrave that knowledge on our hearts, and to recall to our minds the observance of our duties!

6. "The weakness of the will" is another consequence of Original Sin. Our will has become rebellious; evil passions tyrannize over us, and strive to usurp the empire of the soul and destroy the government of reason and of virtue. In the state of innocence, the will was clear, serene, free from passion, and bore a resemblance to the will of God. The will found no obstacle in the exercise of all theological and other supernatural virtues, but in consequence of original sin the will became weakened, its strength was lost, and, alas! too often stood in opposition to the will of God. Since the fall of our first parents, we all have been *inclined to evil*; our inclinations tend towards sensual pleasures—towards pride, anger,

impurity, and all other vices. Even in our infancy, what sallies of passion—what fits of ill-humour—what proneness to revenge! Every day we have to fight against this inclination to evil. Man's life on earth is a continual warfare; hence the groanings of true Christian souls who experience this evil bent of the will, and their regret, seeing the danger to which they are exposed, at not being called out of life by God. The first man was not created thus: when he came forth from the hands of God, he felt not the slightest "inclination to evil"; God had given him a right heart, and there was not the slightest taint of evil in his composition. Blindness of the understanding, weakness of the will, and "inclination to evil", are the effects of Original Sin.

Q. What is the reason that darkness in our understanding, weakness in our will, and a propensity to evil, still remain, with many other temporal punishments, after original sin is forgiven?

A. To serve as an occasion of merit to us, by resisting our corrupt inclinations, and by bearing patiently the sufferings of this life.

7. The "corrupt inclinations" of our nature—that continual longing after the vanities and fleeting pleasures of the world—that evil propensity which seeks self in everything—the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, remain in us after we have been cleansed from original sin in the salutary waters of baptism. But those evil inclinations are not sins—they are only the effects of sin, and if, by the aid of heavenly grace, we endeavour to subdue them, they will be to us an "occasion of merit". Jesus Christ has merited for us the graces necessary to subdue our passions; and if we oppose them and wage war against them, so far from our

souls being sullied by them, they will add gems to the crown of glory reserved for us in heaven. Such is God's goodness towards us, that the very chastisements of sin we can render subservient to our attainment of heaven. "Our inclinations to evil" can be a means of acquiring humility, distrust of, and continual watch over ourselves.

8. "By bearing patiently the sufferings of this life", we can acquire eternal happiness in the life to come. If, in a spirit of resignation to God's holy will, we endure hunger, thirst, sickness, pains, sorrows, torments, insults, and all the various other evils caused by original sin, we are told by God that we shall be blessed and comforted, and be put in possession of joy and glory in His heavenly kingdom, and that our happiness no one shall ever take from us. Jesus Christ, by His passion and death, has merited for us more graces than we have lost by sin. Our holy Church cries out, O happy fault! which has obtained a Redeemer so illustrious : *O felix culpa, quæ talem ac tantum meruit habere Redemptorem!* Oh, how grateful we should feel to a God so merciful ! Though we can never recover the many gifts forfeited by our first parents, yet we can render our pains and privations—the effects of their sin—meritorious of eternal life.

Q. What is the lot of those who die in original sin without being guilty of actual sin ?

A. They will be deprived of eternal beatitude, but we are allowed to think that they will not be condemned to the fire of hell.

9. It is certain that all who die, not excepting infants, without being cleansed from original sin, are deprived of the intuitive vision of God, and of the supernatural happiness of the saints. Jesus Christ has said : " Except a man be born again of water and

the Holy Ghost, he can never enter the kingdom of heaven" (*John*, iii. 5). It is equally certain that the souls of all who die in actual sin, or stained with original sin alone, go immediately into hell to be punished, but not all to the same extent or in the same way. The Council of Florence has defined this as certain doctrine. But in hell, as well as in heaven, there are many mansions ; and a great many learned fathers are of opinion that in hell there is a particular place called limbo, where children go who die without being baptized, and where, though deprived of eternal beatitude, they are not condemned to suffer the pains of hell fire. With regard to the pain of loss, St. Thomas teaches, that though infants dying without baptism are excluded from glory, they are not afflicted at the privation of the happiness, of which they are incapable. Hence, as a man does not feel pain at not being able to fly, so these infants are not afflicted at not being able to enjoy the glory which they never were capable of possessing, either by the principles of nature or by their own merits.

10. Many learned writers think that, at least after the last judgment, infants who have died without baptism not only shall not suffer pain at their exclusion from eternal beatitude, but that they will even enjoy their own natural goods, and the divine goodness, inasmuch as they shall have a natural knowledge and a natural love of God ; that they shall be placed in a sort of terrestrial paradise, where they shall live happy, adorned with moral virtues, and favoured with angels' visits. This is the opinion of Ambrose Catharin, of Cardinal Sfrondat, and of many others, which, though apparently opposed to the literal meaning of Scripture; has not been condemned by the Church. " Prescinding from this natural enjoyment which infants who have died without baptism may possess, it is very equitable", says St. Liguori,

"and considering the Divine mercy, it appears to me more probable, that they receive neither reward nor punishment in the other life, and from this opinion St. Augustine himself does not dissent".*

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

PELAGIUS.

Pelagius, the heresiarch, was born at the close of the fourth century, in Wales. At his birth he was called Morgan, a Welsh word signifying *born on the sea coast*, but it was afterwards changed into *Pelagius*, a Latin word having the same meaning as Morgan. He entered the monastery of Bangor, in north Wales, and became a professed monk. Though possessed of no great learning, he was not deficient in genius. He quitted his cloister and travelled to Rome, where he remained for some years, and grew into some repute. The character he bore of a learned and virtuous monk opened to him an epistolary correspondence with St. Austin and St. Jerome. From his letters, these holy men soon discovered his real character; under the mask of piety they discovered a depth of hypocrisy, and under an imposing language, frightful errors of doctrine, against which they judged it necessary to caution the faithful. The errors of Pelagius in doctrinal points were congenial with the inbred pride of his heart. He denied the existence of original sin in the soul of man, and rejected the necessity of Divine grace for the merit of good works; contending that Adam, by sinning, only hurt himself, and that his descendants are now born in the very same state they would always have been had he never sinned, and, as a necessary consequence, that infants, dying without baptism, enjoy eternal life. Two councils, one held in Carthage and the other at Milevis, defined that the sin of Adam has descended to his posterity. This decision has been confirmed by Pope Innocent, who condemned the errors of Pelagius and his adherents, and declared them separated from the communion of the Catholic Church. St. Agustine, who had taken a very active part in this business, considered it to be now ended. "Rome", says he, "has spoken; the sentence of the African bishops has

* Defence of the Council of Trent.

been transmitted to the Apostolic See; the Pontiff's letters that confirm it are to come to hand; the cause is finally decided"—*causa finita est*. Pelagius and his disciple, Celestius, a smooth-tongued Scot, lurked secretly in the East till they died in silent obscurity.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What is the sin of our first parents called?
2. Why is the sin in which we have been born called original sin?
3. Can we understand how this sin has been transmitted to us?
4. Is it unjust on the part of God to punish us for our first parents' fault?
5. What have been the consequences to us of original sin?
6. Are our evil propensities to be traced to original sin?
7. Are our evil inclinations and propensities sins?
8. Shall sufferings and afflictions gain for us eternal happiness?
9. Will children who die without baptism be condemned to hell fire?
10. Shall children dying without baptism be altogether deprived of happiness?

PRACTICE.

1. Often think of the melancholy consequences of original sin, and the great evil of disobeying God.
2. Never cease thanking God for delivering you from the slavery of sin and the devil, and for making the effects of original sin subservient to our eternal happiness.
3. Bear patiently all the evils of life, that they may be to you meritorious of eternal life.

PRAYER.

We believe, O Lord, that "we have been conceived in iniquity", and that in sin our mothers have conceived us, because Thou Thyself hast revealed it. True, we to-day feel the effects of our miserable slavery; but Thou, O Lord! hast burst the chains which have bound us, and hast delivered us from the power of hell. We give Thee thanks, O Divine Redeemer!

for Thy many benefits, and for Thy great mercy. And you, Holy and Immaculate Virgin ! you who have been conceived without sin, obtain for us, from your dear Son, the grace of never yielding to our corrupt inclinations, and of enjoying with you, in heaven, that happiness for which we have been created. Amen.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ON JESUS CHRIST, OUR REDEEMER.

Q. Did Christ become man immediately after the transgression of our first parents ?

A. No ; though He was immediately promised to them as a Redeemer (*Gen.*, iii. 15).

1. God could, without the slightest injustice, punish our first parents with the same severity as He punished the rebellious angels ; He could, the very moment they transgressed, cast them down into hell. But God does not treat them so. He holds out to them a hope. Whilst the stroke of divine justice is falling on their heads, a ray of divine mercy is glittering before their eyes. "I will", He says to the serpent, "put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed : she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel" (*Gen.*, iii.). You have made an attack on the first woman, and you have succeeded ; but another shall arise, against whom all your artifices will be in vain. This woman, a virgin and mother at the same time, will bring into the world a Son, who shall be victorious over you. Fired with rage and madness at seeing her rescuing the unhappy, whom you hold captive, you will "lie in wait for her heel", by attaching to a

cross His humanity; but through the infirmity of His flesh, by the outrages which He shall suffer, and by His death, "He shall crush thy head", and destroy thy power. This is the meaning of the words which God addressed to the serpent. They contain, as you have seen, "the promise of a Redeemer"—a promise which God in His great mercy made to sinful man, immediately after his fall.

2. Why God did not send a Redeemer immediately after our first parents' fall, we can assign many reasons:—1. That, abandoned to himself for a long time, man might have full experience of his weakness, feel the need he had of a Redeemer, and sigh ardently for His coming.—2. That the strongest proofs of the greatness of the Messiah might be given by previous prophecies regarding His birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, and all the wonderful things He was to produce in the world.—3. That when the Messiah really came, His followers and the whole world might see that the religion taught by Him, and all the events resulting from it, were foretold in the record of past times; and that what occurred in previous ages were all such types of Christ, and of His doctrine and institutions, as might tend to make religion venerated, and attach men to the Messiah. We can then say, though God has not told us, that as we are indebted to His great mercy for a Redeemer, so, too, through His great mercy, the "Redeemer" was not "sent immediately after the transgression of our first parents".

3. Having for many ages no other guide but their reason, the children of Adam altogether forgot the old traditions, or, at least, only preserved a confused remembrance of them, as they had been mixed up with the grossest and vilest superstitions. By experience they were taught that of themselves they were weak and miserable—impotent for good, and

ignorant of what was most necessary to be known. Thus, the most enlightened philosophers acknowledged that the world required to be enlightened, reformed, and that man was unequal to the required reformation. The words of the great philosopher, Plato, are deserving of consideration: "Let us wait patiently", said he, fully convinced of his own blindness, and the blindness prevailing everywhere, "let us wait patiently for some one to come from heaven, who will instruct us in the way in which we are to comport ourselves towards the gods and towards men. But who is he who shall enlighten us? When shall he appear? Let this divine legislator come, and we shall hear him".

Q. How many years after the fall of our first parents did Christ become man?

A. About four thousand years.

4. Though God promised a Saviour immediately after the transgression of our first parents, yet "four thousand years" passed on before the Redeemer appeared. So long a delay is an evident proof of the *gratefulness* of this great gift. For if God allowed four thousand years to flow by before sending a Redeemer, it follows, that He might, without any injustice, abandon man to himself, and do nothing to raise him from that abyss of perdition into which he had fallen. But having made the promise of a Redeemer, the promise must be fulfilled.

Q. How could they be saved, who lived before Christ became man?

A. By the belief of a Redeemer to come, and by keeping the commandments of God.

5. Christ died for all men, as well for those who lived before, as for those who have existed since, His death. During the four thousand years preceding the coming of Christ, God, in His infinite mercy, applied the merits and satisfaction of His Son, by anticipation, for the sanctification of men. He granted them graces ; and by making use of these graces they could live in holiness and justice ; for many among the Jews have been sanctified—Abel, Seth, Noe, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, etc. ; and even some among the Gentiles,* as Melchisedec and Job. But, in order to be saved before the coming of our Redeemer, it was necessary for all to honour, love, and serve God, “by keeping His commandments”—loving their neighbours, abstaining from every injustice. They should follow the dictates of right reason, believe in the promised Messiah, and hope in His future merits. But the Jewish people, in addition to those duties, were obliged to observe faithfully all the precepts of the law of Moses, and to believe all that God had revealed to them. Since the coming of our Redeemer, a firm belief that He has appeared, and unwavering confidence in His superabundant merits, are also necessary in order to obtain salvation. So the Redeemer, “expected or come, has been at all times the consolation and hope of God’s children ; and religion has been always uniform, or rather always the same, since the commencement of the world. The same God has been always recognized as the Creator, and the same Jesus Christ as the Saviour of mankind”.†

Q. Was man faithful to God during the time that preceded the coming of Christ ?

A. No ; the posterity of Adam and Eve very soon became a wicked race of people.

* The people of every nation, except those of the Jewish nation, were called Gentiles.

† Bossuet.

6. Adam and Eve, after having been driven out of Paradise, had many children. The first of their sons was called Cain, and the second was called Abel. Cain, a name signifying *acquisition, possession, cultivation*, became a shepherd, and looked after the flocks of sheep and goats. Both worshipped the Supreme Being by religious sacrifices. One offered to God the best and fattest of his flocks, the other presented Him with the fruits of the earth. These sacrifices were what God Himself first taught Adam to offer, in order to sanctify the seventh, or Sabbath day, on which God Himself rested from the work that He had made, and also that he should show, by some token, that all he had received from the cultivation of the earth was the gift of God. For this purpose God showed him how he was to offer sacrifice : an altar was first to be erected, and then the gift, after being offered up on it, was to be burned with fire. Burning it with fire showed that, after it had been presented to God, it was not to be converted by Adam to his own use, but should be altogether destroyed, as a sign of the supreme dominion of God over all created things. In the sacrifice of animals, God, moreover, intended that the shedding of the blood of the animal that was to be offered in sacrifice, should be a sign that in time to come the blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, should be shed on the cross for the sins of all the guilty children of Adam.

7. The offerings made by Cain and Abel, were made with very different dispositions, and so they were differently received by God. God showed more favour to the offerings of Abel than to those of Cain. The fire of heaven consumed the gifts of Abel, but it left untouched those of Cain. Cain grew jealous at the preference given to his brother; he became gloomy and discontented, and his heart was filled

with rancour. His jealousy grew so strong that he made up his mind to murder his brother, and only waited for an opportunity to put his intentions into execution. Whilst he was in this angry and jealous state of mind, God Himself spoke to him and said : " Why art thou angry ? and why is thy countenance fallen ? If thou doest well, shalt thou not also receive a reward ? and if thou doest ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door ? but the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it ". But the admonition proved unavailing. After a dreadful conflict between his conscience and his envious passion, he goes to seek his brother Abel. He finds him, and then invites him to walk out with him into the fields : " Let us go forth abroad together ". When they were in the field he made a violent attack upon his unsuspecting brother, and slew him on the spot. After having committed this horrid deed, Cain thought to fly, but Almighty God, Who had seen the murder, in a threatening tone arrested his steps, and said to him : " Where is thy brother Abel ? " Cain, hardened in guilt, answered Him : " I know not. Am I my brother's keeper ? " And God said to him : " What hast thou done ? The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to Me from the earth. Now, therefore, cursed shalt thou be upon the earth, which hath opened her mouth and received the blood of thy brother at thy hand. When thou shalt till it, it shall not yield thee its fruits ; a fugitive and a wanderer shalt thou be upon the earth " (*Gen.*, iv. 10).

8. At these dreadful words despair took possession of his guilty soul. " My iniquity is greater ", he cries out, " than that I may deserve pardon. Behold Thou dost cast me out this day from the face of the earth, and I shall be hidden from Thy face, and I shall be a vagabond and a fugitive on the earth ;

every one, therefore, that findeth me shall kill me". And the Lord said to him : " No, it shall not be so ; but whosoever shall kill Cain shall be punished seven-fold" ; showing that no one has a right to be avenged on another, or to put him to death by his own authority. And God set a mark upon him, that whosoever found him should not kill Cain. What sort of mark was this ? Was it a visible brand on the face, or was it only a trace imprinted on his features by the sting of his conscience ? It is of little consequence to us to know the nature of that mark. That vengeance cannot be taken into our own hands is what the sacred writer wishes to inculcate. The death of Abel is said by the holy fathers to be a figure of the death of Christ. Abel was murdered by his own brother, through hatred and jealousy. Jesus Christ was put to death by the chief priests and people of His own nation, from the same kind of hatred and jealousy.

9. Cain, torn by remorse and pressed down by the weight of his disgrace, quitted his native soil, in sadness and anguish, and in company with his unhappy partner, fled to the east of Eden : " He went out from the face of the Lord, and dwelt as a fugitive on the earth". As he was an impenitent murderer, he would not be allowed by God to be present at the offering of sacrifices, but was forced to live separate from the other members of Adam's family. In this new country in which he was settled, he became the father of many children, who were brought up without any fear or knowledge of God. Cain had become an unbeliever, and gave up the practice of every religious duty ; and his descendants, inheriting their father's spirit, became a very wicked race of men.

10. After the death of Abel and the flight of Cain with his wife, Adam and Eve were for some time, as it were, alone in the world ; but soon Eve

gave birth to another son, who was called Seth, that is, *substituted*, because God had given him in place of Abel. Seth had a son called Enos, who, with his descendants, Cainan, Malaleel, Jared, Enoch, Mathusalem, and Lamech, were animated with a spirit of religion, and were careful to keep themselves in the fear of the Lord, and on that account were called the children of God; whilst the descendants of Cain, living without any law, and giving themselves up to frightful excesses and abominable crimes, were called the children of men. The different families of Seth and Cain, having nothing in common between them, neither religion, nor laws, nor manners, remained for twelve centuries without holding any intercourse with each other; the families of Seth living to the east of the Tigris, the families of Cain to the west. But, in process of time, when the population increased, and when the dwellings of the different families approached each other nearer and nearer, the communication between both races became inevitable, as the religious began to marry and intermarry with the unbelieving families. The children of God, no longer worthy of that name, soon became as wicked and as incorrigible as the children of men. Their wickedness became so great, and their morals so corrupt, that God could no longer remain patient with them, but "it repented Him that He made man", and He resolved to sweep him off the face of the earth.

Q. Did God leave unpunished this universal wickedness?

A. No; God punished man's crimes in a most signal manner, for He destroyed the whole world by a deluge.

11. God seeing that the world was every day increasing in wickedness, and "that all the thought of their heart was bent upon evil at all times", was sorry that He had made man on the earth; and,

being touched with sorrow of heart, He said : "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, from man even to beasts, from the creeping thing even to the fowls of the air ; for it repented Me that I have made them" (*Gen.*, vi.).

Among so many thousands of men that were then living, Noe alone was a just one, who, with his three sons, Sem, Cham, and Japhet, found favour in God's eyes. To him, therefore, God mentioned the resolution He had taken of destroying the race of man by an universal deluge ; and as mercy was to be shown to him and his family, because he persevered in justice and holiness, God commanded him to build an ark, or vessel of extraordinary dimensions, which might serve as a place of security from the roaring and rushing of the waters. Noe commenced the work at once, and spent a hundred years in its construction. During all that time he spared neither threats nor admonitions that he might resist the torrent of evil that spread in every direction. But his threats were disregarded, and his admonitions were slighted, and he had to endure the scoffs and jeers of his sinful neighbours, who, of course, considered as a great piece of folly the work at which he was employed, as there was no water hard by in which it could sail. "They ate, and drank, and married", as usual, without bestowing scarcely a thought on the destruction impending over their heads.

12. When the ark was finished, God commanded Noah to take of every kind of bird and animal, both male and female, seven couple of those that were clean, and one couple only of such as were unclean.* Noah was employed six days in executing these

* *Clean* animals were those that were allowed to be offered up in sacrifice: *unclean* could not be slain on the altar.

orders, and on the seventh day he and his wife with his three sons, Sem, Cham, and Japhet, and their three wives, entered the ark, and God fastened the door on the outside. Noah was then 600 years old, and the age of the world was 1656. When all were safe within the ark, the voice of an avenging God on a sudden "broke up the fountains of the great deep, and the flood-gates of heaven were opened, and the rain fell upon the earth for forty days and forty nights".

13. And the water overflowed exceedingly, and covered the surface of the earth, and rushed on with such impetuosity that soon it covered the highest mountains, and its surface was fifteen cubits higher than the mountains which it covered. The whole race of man, if we except those who were in the ark, perished in the Deluge. Birds, animals, and men were swept away by the torrent, and lay buried in the deep. Noah only remained, and they that were with him in the ark, which rose with the rising flood, and rode triumphant over the foaming waters. In this way was Noah with his family saved, in recompense for his piety, and that he might re-people a better world.*

14. About the end of one hundred and fifty days, or five months, God brought a wind upon the earth, which, blowing steadily from one point, began to dispel the clouds, and drive the waters back to their source. The inundation soon decreased, and the ark, in the seventh month, in the seventh day of the month, rested upon the top of Mount Ararat in Armenia. And the ark there rested for four months, and in the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible. Forty days after, Noah, eager to know whether the waters had subsided, opened the window and sent out a crow, which did not return. Seven days after a dove was sent out, and not finding

any place to rest upon, soon flew back, and was taken in again. At the end of seven days more, Noah again sent forth the dove, and in the evening she returned to him, carrying a green olive branch in her bill, which Noah received with joy, as it was a proof that not only the waters had abated, but a sign that God was reconciled with the world. Yet he waited seven days more, and sent out the dove a third time, which did not return. In the three hundred and thirtieth day from the commencement of the Deluge Noah opened the top of the ark, looked round, and saw that the waters had retired. Then, by the command of God, he and his wife, with their sons, and every other living creature with them, quitted the ark, after they had been shut up for a whole year.*

Q. What did Noah do on leaving the ark?

A. In gratitude to God he raised an altar, and offered sacrifice to Him.

15. When Noah had left the ark, he erected an altar to the Lord, on which he offered a sacrifice of the clean animals that had been taken into the ark. God was pleased with Noah's gratitude, and accepted the sacrifice. And God promised never more to destroy every living thing upon the earth, as He had done. God also blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them : " Increase and multiply, and fill the earth ; let the fear and dread of you be upon all the beasts, and upon everything that moveth upon the earth"—thus giving a discretionary power to Noah and his sons over all living creatures, with permission to use them for food and nourishment.

16. He, moreover, entered into a solemn covenant with the patriarch, and assigned the rainbow as a

* Noah was shut up in the ark for twelve months and seventeen days.

token of peace between them : " I will establish my covenant with you, and all flesh shall be no more destroyed with the waters of a flood, neither shall there be from henceforth a flood to waste the earth. This is the sign of the covenant which I give between Me and you, and to every living soul that is with you, for perpetual generations. I will set my bow in the clouds, and it shall be the sign of a covenant between Me and the earth. And when I shall cover the sky with clouds, My bow shall appear in the clouds ; and I will remember my covenant with you and every living soul that beareth flesh : and there shall no more be the waters of a flood to destroy all flesh" (*Gen., ix.*). And, accordingly, since that time no such general calamity has befallen mankind, though their crimes now, as well as then, have cried aloud to heaven for vengeance. Whenever, dear children, you see God's bow in the heavens, you should recall to your minds the history of the deluge, and the covenant which God entered into with man. The rainbow is a standing sign of God's mercy towards us, but it also points out the dreadful punishment which God formerly inflicted on sinful man, and should teach us to profit by the warnings that God gives us, and never to defer our conversion until the anger of God falls upon us like a thunderbolt.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

CUVIER ON THE DELUGE.

* It has been often a subject of disputation among philosophers, whether or not the whole world was at one time submerged in water. Geological observations now prove, and all learned writers regard it as certain, that many years ago a deluge had taken place. " If we attach any importance to

the science of geology ", says Cuvier, " we must admit that the surface of our globe has undergone a sudden and universal revolution, and that this great revolution must have taken place about five or six thousand years ago , that there ensued a total disorder in the uniform beauty of the first creation ; that since this revolution of the globe, the small number rescued from the waters of the Deluge have extended themselves through the lands nearly dried up, and, consequently, that it is since this epoch that society has taken a progressive march ; that they have formed communities, raised monuments".

An account, more or less confused, of the Deluge, has been handed down to, and preserved by, almost every country ; and what is very remarkable, all those countries, between which there has scarcely been any communication, are agreed in placing this event at a date four or five thousand years anterior to the present century of the Christian era.

HOW AMERICA WAS PEOPLED AFTER THE DELUGE.

† Some writers have asserted, that it is impossible to conceive how America could be peopled after the Deluge, and hence conclude, that the terrible scourge had not been universal, and that America had not been submerged in water. But recent and very important discoveries made by navigators show, that from the north-east of Tartary the passage to America is neither long nor difficult. The points of resemblance between the natives of both these continents confirm the opinion, that they are descended from the same stock, and that the natives of North America had migrated from the eastern point of Asia. M. de Guenies, in his " History of the Huns ", proves that in the fifth century the Chinese held commercial relations with America. In the tenth century, the Norwegians discovered Northern America, and sent thither a colony, of which in the following centuries all recollection was lost. But colonies could as easily have been sent forth long before the tenth century. Bernardin St. Pierre, in his " Studies of Nature ", has thrown out some observations, which go to prove that South America has been peopled by the natives of Southern Asia, and that a communication could easily take place between both countries, by means of the many isles with which the Pacific is studded. A distinguished Professor of the Academy of St. Petersburg has lately demonstrated, that many years ago Kamschatka was not far removed from America, and that the natives of the northern part of America have descended from a colony that passed over to that country from Kamschatka.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. When was a Redeemer promised to our first parents ?
2. Why was not a Redeemer sent immediately after our first parents' fall ?
3. Was the necessity of a Redeemer fully seen before Christ's coming ?
4. How many years elapsed from the fall of our first parents to the coming of the Redeemer ?
5. By what means were they saved who lived and died before Christ ?
6. Who taught Adam to offer sacrifice ?
7. What were Cain's feelings when his sacrifice was rejected ?
8. Did God set a mark on Cain after the murder of Abel ?
9. Did Cain lay aside the practices of religion after he had murdered his brother ?
10. Who were the descendants of Seth ?
11. What was Noah commanded by God to do ?
12. How old was Noah when he entered the ark ?
13. What consequences followed from the Deluge ?
14. How long did the ark rest on the top of Mount Ararat ?
15. Was God pleased with Noah's sacrifice ?
16. What was the sign of the covenant between God and Noah ?

PRACTICE.

1. Let us always fear the judgments of God, and never forget that God's mercy, if abused, will give place to His wrath.
2. When God calls us to repentance, let us not defer it for a moment, lest we should be cut off suddenly, like those before the Flood.
3. When we see in the sky the rainbow, with its varied tints, let us think upon the mercy of God, and the many graces which He has bestowed upon us.

PRAYER.

O God, receive our thanks for not abandoning men after the Deluge, and for having, despite their ingratitude, preserved to them the benefit of religion ! Preserve me from pride ; grant that I may always be submissive and respectful to my parents and superiors, and that my faith in Thee may be always unshaken. Amen.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE DESCENDANTS OF NOAH.

Q. Were the inhabitants of the earth, after the Deluge, better and more religious than those before the Deluge?

A. No; they became even more wicked; they forgot the true God, and adored idols.

1. After the Deluge the descendants of Noah multiplied so exceedingly that the country they were in became too confined for their numbers. They resolved to remove their dwellings to some other part of the land; but, before their separation, they proposed leaving some famous memorial behind them. At this time they spoke but one language—the only one known at that time. “Each one said to his neighbour, Come let us make bricks and bake them with fire. And they said, Come let us make a city and a tower, the top of which may reach to heaven, and let us make our name famous before we be scattered abroad into all lands”. They began at once to make bricks, and set themselves to the proposed work. But the eye of the Lord was fixed on the city and tower which the descendants of Cham and Japhet were building, and He said: “Behold, it is one people, and they have all one tongue; and they have begun to do this, neither will they leave off from their designs till they accomplish them indeed; come ye, therefore, let Us go down and there confound their tongue, that they may not understand one another’s speech” (*Gen., xi.*). And hearing nothing but discordant sounds, and unable to understand each other, they were obliged to abandon the work. It was on this account called the Tower of *Babel*, or *confusion*. The various families of mankind being now forced to move onward in quest of new settlements, laid the

foundation of states and kingdoms. Removed from under the eye of their patriarch, they forgot God and the practices of religion, and gave themselves up to their own evil desires. The consequences were, wars, oppression, and violence.

2. Nimrod, of the accursed family of Cham, was the first warrior and first conqueror; and the Scripture says that he was a "stout hunter before the Lord". He settled down on the river Euphrates, where he built the city of Babel, or Babylon, and many other towns along the site of the Tower of Babel. Assur, of the family of Sem, settled on the Tigris, and built Niniveh, afterwards the seat of the great empire of Assyria. The description of these cities, and particularly of Niniveh, which history has preserved, proves to us that every pleasure and delight capable of rendering life dear, were there to be found. But in the midst of this pomp and grandeur, the mind of man, as far as the knowledge of the true God was concerned, was buried in total darkness. They gave themselves up to the grossest idolatry. Fire, air, the stars, the sea, men, even beasts, were objects of adoration and worship. The blindness of man did not even stop there. The adoration at first rendered to creatures was soon paid to the very works of man's hand. They worshipped gold, silver, wood, and stones. The Egyptian mummy—a dead body embalmed—became the model of the idols publicly worshipped in the temples. Some of these idols had the head of a brute creature placed upon a human shape, and prostrate before them in adoration they addressed them with this prayer: "Save me, for you are my God". St. Paul says: "That when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, of birds, of four-footed beasts, and of creeping

things" (*Rom.*, i. 23). You can scarcely believe, dear children, that man could descend to such impiety and folly; but it is, alas! too true, that after the Deluge the grossest form of idolatry prevailed to an alarming extent.

3. The knowledge of the true God was not, however, altogether lost. It was still preserved among the descendants of Sem, the eldest of Noah's three sons. Sem was chosen by God, in preference to his brothers, to be the head of a privileged branch, from which the Messias, promised from the beginning of the world, was to proceed. Arphaxed, Sale, Heber, Phaleg, Rehu, Sarug, Nachor, Thare—lineal descendants of Sem—remained faithful to the Lord, and religiously observed His law. But everywhere around them there was nothing but disorder and corruption, and even within their own families idolatry began to spread itself, and the most revolting superstitions were practised. God seeing the whole world abandoned to the most shameful passions and vices, selected to Himself a man whom He destined to be the founder of a race who would preserve a knowledge of the true religion, the purity of His worship, and would become the depository of His promises.

Q. Who was this man selected by God to be the founder of a more faithful people?

A. Abraham, to whom God made a promise that from his race should come forth the Saviour of mankind.

4. Abraham, the son of Thare, and the tenth in a right line of descent from Noah, merited, by his piety and virtue, to be chosen by heaven as the father of a people who would preserve the worship of the true God to the coming of the promised Messias. This just man lived with his father in Ur, a city in the country of the Chaldeans. When he was about seventy years of age, the Lord appeared to him, and

said: "Go forth out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, and come into the land which I shall show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee. . . . I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee, and IN THEE shall all the kindred of the earth be blessed" (*Gen.*, xii. 1). This command of God, called the Vocation of Abraham, was given in the year 2083 of the world, and 1921 before Christ. Abraham obeyed at once, went out of his country, taking Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, with him, and commenced his journey towards the country pointed out to him by God. After a long and painful journey, he arrived at Haran, a city in Mesopotamia, to the north of Mount Lebanon. He had scarcely passed three years in that city, when he proceeded on his journey towards the land of Chanaan.

5. Having arrived there, the Lord again appeared to him, renewed the promise of giving all that country to his family: "To thy seed will I give this land". Abraham built an altar on the spot, and paid his adorations to the Lord. As a sign of the solemn alliance which the Lord contracted with Abraham, and that it might be a mark of distinction between his descendants and all other nations of the earth, the Lord imposed, at that time, on him, the law of circumcision. God said again to Abraham: "Sarai (my princess), thy wife, thou shalt not call Sarai, but Sara (princess). And I will bless her, and of her I will give thee a son, whom I will bless. He shall be the chief of nations, and kings of different people shall spring from him" Abraham was then a hundred years old, and Sara ninety, and in the following year they brought forth a son as God had told them.

Q. Did any remarkable punishment take place about this time?

A. Yes; the city of Sodom was destroyed by sulphur and brimstone, on account of the wickedness of its inhabitants.

6. Abraham was one sultry day sitting at the door of his tent, when, as he lifted up his eyes, he saw three men standing before him. He at once ran to meet them, and when he came up to them he saluted them by bowing down to the ground. He invited them to take some refreshment, and got it served up under a tree, himself standing by the whole time and helping his guests. When they had partaken of the repast, and had promised a son to Abraham, they rose up and departed for Sodom, accompanied a part of the way by Abraham. As they went along, God communicated to Abraham the dreadful intelligence that they were going to destroy Sodom, on account of its unnatural crimes, which cried aloud for vengeance. The Lord said: "The cry of Sodom and Gomorrha is multiplied, and their sin is become exceedingly grievous. I will go down and see whether they have done according to the cry that is come to Me, or whether it be not so, that I may know" (*Gen., xviii.*). Abraham interposed, and asked the Lord if He would "destroy the just with the wicked?" And the Lord promised Abraham that if even ten just persons could be found in Sodom He would not destroy it. But ten could not be found.

7. In the evening two of the angels came to Sodom, and they found Lot sitting at the gate; and Lot, after "worshipping them prostrate to the ground", pressingly invited them to his house. When they were retiring at night to rest, the house was surrounded with the young and the old of the city, who demanded that the young men should be sent out to them. Lot went out to expostulate with

them, but so far from calming them down, he was treated with the rudest violence, and would have fallen into their hands, had not the angels put out their hands and taken him in. They then closed the door, and at the same time struck all who were outside with blindness, so as to prevent them from seeing the way.

8. In the morning they told Lot to leave the city, as it was to be immediately destroyed, and to take with him his wife and two daughters ; and when he was reluctant to leave, they took them by the hand and led them out of the city, and enjoined them to go on speedily to the mountain, and not dare look back. Lot being afraid to go to the mountain, "lest some evil should seize him", got permission to retire to the city of Segor, near at hand. No sooner had Lot entered Segor, than the Lord rained down a shower of brimstone and fire on Sodom and Gomorrha, and two other towns. And at once these cities and towns, with their inhabitants, and all the country round about, were destroyed. Lot's wife, on hearing the terrific noise, forgot the orders of the angels, looked back at the city of Sodom ; and in punishment for her disobedience, was changed on the spot into a pillar of salt. When Abraham got up early in the morning, "he looked towards Sodom and Gomorrha, and the whole land of that country, and he saw the ashes rise up from the earth as the smoke of a furnace" (*Gen., xix.*).

Q. Who were the descendants of Abraham ?

A. Abraham had a son called Isaac, and Isaac had a son named Jacob.

9. Sara, in her old age, had a son, as the Lord had promised, and he was called Isaac, a name signifying *smile*, for this child of benediction had brought

back the smile on the lips of his parents. Isaac was twenty-five years old when Abraham, his father, was put to a severe trial. He was ordered by God to take his only son, whom he fondly loved, and sacrifice him upon one of the mountains which should be shown him. Abraham, taking with him Isaac and two servants, set out for the mountain ; and when he arrived at the place shown him, he erected an altar there, and laid wood upon it. Then taking Isaac, his son, he bound him, laid him upon the pile of wood, and stretching forth his hand, took up the sword to strike him. An angel at once stopped his arm, telling him that God was satisfied with his obedience. Abraham, looking round, saw a ram with his horns caught by the briers, took him, and offered him up as a sacrifice in the place of his son.

When Isaac was about forty years of age, he married Rebecca, daughter of Bethuel, son of Nachor. He inherited the magnificent promises made by God to his father ; and Abraham, when dying, at the age of one hundred and seventy-five years, bequeathed all his property to Isaac ; but to his other children he presented merely gifts. He was buried by Isaac and Ishmael, alongside Sara, his wife, "in the double cave which is over against Mambre, and which he bought of the children of Heth" (*Gen., xxv. 9*).

10. Isaac and Rebecca had been twenty years married, and yet had no child. Isaac offered up a prayer to the Lord for a son ; and Rebecca became pregnant with and brought forth twins. The first-born was red and hairy, and was called Esau. The other was born holding the heel of his brother, and was called Jacob, or the *supplanter*. Jacob inherited all the promises made to his grandfather Abraham. One day the Lord appeared to him and said : "I will multiply thy seed like the stars of heaven, and I will give to thy posterity all these

countries, and in thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed". At a later period his name was changed into that of Israel, on account of a mysterious wrestling, which, during a whole night, he had with an angel. It was an angel in human shape, who, not being able to throw him, touched the sinew of his thigh, which immediately contracted. The angel said to him, "Let me go, for it is break of day. And Jacob answered, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. And he said : What is thy name ? He answered, Jacob. But he said : thy name shall not be called Jacob, but Israel ; for if thou hast been strong against God, how much more shalt thou prevail against men ?"*

Q. How many children had Jacob ?

A. Jacob had twelve sons and one daughter.

11. Jacob was the father of twelve sons, who respectively became the heads of twelve families, and these twelve families founded the twelve tribes comprising the people chosen and favoured by God. The name of the twelve patriarch-sons of Jacob were : Ruben, Simeon, Levi, Juda, Issachar, Zabulon, Dan, Neptali, Gad, Azer, Joseph, and Benjamin. Jacob had, too, a daughter called Dina, who, through curiosity, going out one day to see the women of Sichem, was carried off by the king's son. Her curiosity cost her both her virginity and liberty. Alas ! how many young women have fallen, like Dina, through curiosity, into shame and disgrace.

Q. In what country did Jacob or Israel dwell ?

A. Jacob, after the death of his father, settled himself down in Chanaan ; but having been called by his son Joseph into Egypt, he dwelt there with his family.

12. Jacob, after the violence offered to his daugh-

ter Dina, quitted Sichem, and with his family marched on to Bethel, where, shortly after, his wife Rachel died in childbed, about the year 2288 of the world. About this time died his father Isaac, one hundred and eighty years old. Jacob visited him before his death, and, together with Esau, bore his remains to the grave. After his father's death, Jacob had many domestic trials. This period of his life was embittered by the contentions of his own sons. The virtue and piety of Joseph gained for him his father's particular love. Jacob loved Joseph more than any other of his children, and presented him as a testimony of his affection a variegated robe. This brought on Joseph the ill-will of his brothers : they hated him because he was his father's favourite. One day his father sent him to visit his brothers, who were in care of their flocks, in the plains of Sichem. As soon as they saw him, they resolved to put him to death, but being dissuaded by Ruben against that dreadful crime, they sold him for twenty pieces of silver to Ishmaelite merchants, who carried him away into Egypt, and there sold him to Putiphar, the first officer of Pharaoh's guards. Joseph in a short time gained unbounded influence over Pharaoh. His wisdom and his true interpretation of dreams raised him to the first place in the kingdom of Egypt. When famine overspread the land, he invited his father and brothers into Egypt, he presented Jacob to Pharaoh, who, struck by the dignified bearing of the holy old man, asked his age. He answered : "The days of my pilgrimage are a hundred and thirty years, few and evil, and they are not come up to the days of the pilgrimage of my fathers" (*Gen.*, xlviij.).

13. After a happy residence in Egypt during seventeen years, the aged patriarch felt that his death was approaching, he called Joseph to his bedside, and said to him : "Thou shalt take me away out of this land,

and bury me in the burying-place of my ancestors. And Joseph answered : I will do as thou hast commanded". He then presented his two sons to him, and Jacob blessed them, placing his right hand on Ephraim, and his left on Manasses ; and declared that Manasses should be greater than Ephraim. A few moments after, all the children were collected around his bed, and each in turn received his blessing, and was told whatever was to happen to his descendants. He reproached Ruben, the eldest, with the enormous crime he committed ; and Simeon and Levi, for their rage and fury. Coming to Juda, the fourth son, he gave him the promise of being the forefather of the Messias, and foretold that the EXPECTATION OF ALL NATIONS should be born about the time when the sovereign power should be taken away from the Jewish nation. The sceptre shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from before him, till He come that is to be sent ; and He shall be the expectation of the nations" (*Genesis, xl ix. 10.*)

14. And when he said this, he gathered his feet into the bed and died, in the hundred and forty-seventh year of his age, leaving to his numerous posterity, besides the riches which he inherited from his fathers, and which he had acquired himself, an inheritance far more valuable—the religion of Noah, of Abraham, and Isaac, the sacred deposit of divine revelation, and the brilliant example of his many virtues. Joseph seeing that his father was no more, threw himself on his face and shed copious tears. He gave orders to have his body embalmed, as was then the custom, and together with his brothers accompanied the remains to their final resting-place, the land of Chanaan, and laid them in the double cave near Mambre, by the side of Abraham and Isaac. Joseph survived his father about sixty years, and died

at the age of an hundred and ten, in the year 2369 of the world.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

TYPES OF THE MESSIAH.

* God not only promised the Messiah and foretold His coming through the prophets, but also prefigured Him in the persons of the patriarchs and the just who preceded His coming. The principal types or figures of Jesus Christ are Abel, Noah, Isaac, Joseph, and Jonas. Abel is a figure of the Messiah, because he offered sacrifice, was killed by his brother, and because his blood cried aloud to heaven for vengeance. Our Lord offered sacrifice, was put to death by the Jews, His brethren, and His blood cried to heaven for mercy. Abel's murderer became a wanderer on the face of the earth; the murderers of our Lord are condemned to wander over the earth without priest, without king, without sacrifice. Noah is a figure of Jesus Christ. Noah signifies consoler; Jesus signifies Saviour. Noah alone found grace before God; our Lord alone finds grace before His Father. Noah builds an ark which saved him and his family from the Deluge; our Lord builds a Church to save from eternal death all who are willing to enter it. Isaac is a figure of Jesus Christ. Isaac is the well-beloved son of his father; our Lord is the well-beloved Son of the Eternal. Isaac, though innocent, is condemned to death, is to be sacrificed by his father, and must himself carry the wood; Jesus Christ is innocently condemned to death, is immolated by His Father through the hands of the Jews, carries on His shoulders the wood of the cross. As Isaac was tied to the pile without a murmur, our Saviour was tied to a pillar without a complaint. Joseph is, too, a figure of our Redeemer. Joseph is the well-beloved son of his father, is sold by his brethren to strange merchants, is condemned for a crime of which he is innocent, is found in a prison with two criminals, to one of whom he announces pardon, to the other punishment. Our Lord, the beloved Son of His Father, is maltreated by His brethren the Jews, is sold by Judas, and given up to the Romans, is condemned for crimes of which He is innocent, is placed on a cross be-

tween two criminals, promises heaven to one, and leaves the other to his perdition. And as Joseph passed from prison to a throne, so our Lord passed from the cross to the throne of God. Jonas remaining three days in the whale's belly, and delivered from it, is a figure of Jesus remaining three days in the grave, and then arising from it (*Abbé Gaume*).

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What are the particular circumstances connected with the Tower of Babel?
2. Who founded Niniveh and Babylon? What was the character of their inhabitants?
3. At this period was the knowledge of God altogether lost?
4. Did the Lord make any remarkable promise to Abraham?
5. When was the law of Circumcision imposed?
6. What were the punishments with which Sodom was threatened?
7. What took place whilst the angels were in Lot's house?
8. When Lot entered Segur, what terrible circumstance took place?
9. Relate the history of Isaac and Rebecca.
10. Had they any children, and what were their names?
11. How many children had Jacob? Mention their names.
12. Had Jacob any trials to undergo from his children?
13. When dying did Jacob prophesy anything of importance?
14. What did Jacob bequeath to his posterity?

PRACTICE.

1. Always recollect that God humbles and confounds the proud and presumptuous.
2. Think of the signal manner in which God has punished the sin of impurity, and resolve never to transgress against the holy virtue of purity.
3. Let parents learn, from the history of Joseph, not to show a particular love to any one child more than another.

PRAYER.

O my God! Who art all love, I thank Thee for having given me the patriarchs, as so many beautiful models of every

virtue. Grant, Lord, that, like them, we may be faithful and grateful to Thee, and that we may show forth in our lives the faith, love, and simplicity of the patriarchs. Amen.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

Q. Were the children of Jacob contented and happy in Egypt?

A. No; their number having very much increased, the Egyptians became jealous of their power, and wished to exterminate them by imposing heavy burthens upon them.

1. The descendants of Jacob multiplied exceedingly, and, like fruitful plants, soon spread and covered the face of the country. The Egyptians became alarmed at their numbers, and to exterminate them imposed heavy burthens upon them. They set them down to the severest works, to building towns and fortresses, that they might be broken down both in mind and body. But the Israelites waxed strong in proportion as they were oppressed. A new king, called Pharaoh, in order to reduce their numbers, issued an infamous order to all the midwives of Egypt to strangle all the male children as soon as they were born. The women refused to put this barbarous order into execution, and devised a means of sparing the lives of the innocents. The king, disappointed in his original scheme, now published a second edict, that all the Hebrew boys should be cast into the River Nile.

2. Whilst this sanguinary persecution was going on, a woman whose name was Jocabel had a son by her husband Amram, the grandson of Levi. A mother's love prompted her to conceal the child, endeared to her by his great beauty. At the end of three months, no longer able to conceal the boy, she

adopted the following contrivance. She took some bulrushes, twisted them together, so as to form a sort of cradle, and lined the inside with pitch. In this she placed her infant, and exposed him on the reedy bank of the Nile, telling her daughter Marie to remain near the place and see what might happen. In a short time Pharaoh's daughter, attended by her maids, came to bathe in the river, and seeing the basket, she ordered one of the maids to bring it to her. She at once opened it, and, to her surprise, found in it a lovely infant crying, and extending its hands, as it were, for help. Pharaoh's daughter took pity on the child, and wished to save it. At this very moment the sister of the child, who noticed what was going on, approached the princess, and said to her: "Shall I go and call to thee a Hebrew woman to nurse the babe?" The king's daughter consented, and the young Israelite ran to call her mother, who came, took the infant, and brought him home, until he was sufficiently grown to remove him. She then repaired to the king's house, presented the boy to the princess, who adopted him for her son, and called him Moses—an Egyptian word signifying saved from the waters—saying, "because I took him out of the water".

3. Moses, after spending his early years in Pharaoh's palace, began to think that his life should not be idly employed. When he was in his thirtieth year he quitted the court of Pharaoh to rejoin his brethren, who were groaning under oppression. Moses, after killing the Egyptian whom he found beating the Hebrew, retired across the Red Sea, into the land of Midian, and there married Sephora, daughter to Jethro, and for forty years he attended her father's flocks. It happened that, on one day, as he led his flocks towards Mount Horeb, the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire which issued from

a bush without consuming it. God said to him : " I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry because of the rigour of them that are over their works. And knowing their sorrow, I am come down to deliver them. I will send thee to Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth My people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. I AM WHO AM. Thus thou shalt say to the children of Israel : He who is hath sent me to thee". Moses begged to decline the mission on the ground that he would not be believed ; but God enforced his obedience, and as a proof that He would always aid him by His power, He performed on the spot two miracles. The rod that Moses held in his hand was changed into a serpent, and from a serpent was again changed into a rod. The Lord commanded him to put his hand into his bosom, and he brought it forth covered with leprosy. And he was commanded to put it back again, and he drew it forth clean again. Moses still hesitated, and urged another plea—the want of eloquence ; but the Lord was angry with Moses, and said : " Aaron, thy brother, shall speak in thy stead to the people, and shall be thy mouth. And take this rod in thy hand wherewith thou shalt perform miracles" (*Exodus*, iv.).

4. Moses was at this time in the eighty-sixth year of his age, and Aaron in the eighty-third. They went together to Pharaoh, and said to him : " Thus saith the Lord God of Israel—Let My people go that they may sacrifice to Me in the desert". But the king, whose heart God hardened, answered : " Who is the Lord, that I should hear His voice, and let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go". Then the Lord sent down on the land frightful plagues, one succeeding the other, called the ten plagues of

Egypt. He changed the waters into blood. He covered the surface of the land with frogs, and to these succeeded sciniphs and flies, a source of continual torment. Then God sent a distemper which destroyed the cattle, followed by an ulcerous disease which attacked both men and beasts. The seventh plague was a storm of driving hail, accompanied with lightning and thunder, which destroyed trees, plants, and everything on which it fell. Afterwards locusts were sent that devoured whatever the hail spared. Then a total darkness overspread the land, except in those parts where the Israelites dwelled. Pharaoh was alarmed, but his heart was not yet softened, and he still continued his oppression of the Israelites. But God at last resolved on a plague so striking and so fatal, that the king, so far from opposing the departure of the Israelites, even pressed them to be gone. One night the angel of the Lord entered into every house in Egypt that was not sprinkled with the blood of the lamb, and slew the first-born both of man and beast. Even the eldest son of Pharaoh was not spared, for, from his palace to the meanest house, there was not a dwelling without a dead body (*Exod.*, xi.).

5. After this, the Israelites, to the number of six hundred thousand men, together with the women and children, marched out of Egypt. They had no sooner departed, than Pharaoh regretted the permission granted to Moses, and resolved at once to pursue them. He put himself at the head of his army, and marched across the desert. The Israelites at first became alarmed, finding themselves closely pursued by Pharaoh, and the Red Sea before them; but Moses inspired them with confidence by a promise of the protection of heaven. When they arrived at the shore of the Red Sea, God said to Moses: "Lift up the rod, and stretch forth thy hand over the sea and

divide it, that the children of Israel may go through the midst of the sea on dry ground". Moses did as he was ordered, and the waters were at once divided, and a passage was opened to the opposite side; they entered the hollow with a wall of waters on either hand, and passed over to the other side. Pharaoh with all his army rushed in after them, but when they arrived at the centre of the abyss, he became so dismayed by the appearance of the fiery cloud before him that he began to turn back. Then God said to Moses: "Stretch forth thy hand over the sea that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians". And Moses did so, and the walls of the water tumbled down, and the whole Egyptian army with their horses and chariots perished in the bosom of the deep—not one escaped.*

Q. Why were the chosen people of God called Israelites?

A. They were so called from the name Israel.

6. The chosen people—the people of God—were called Israelites from Israel, the name given to Jacob by the angel with whom he wrestled during a whole night. They are, too, called Hebrews, from the name Heber, son of Sale, one of the ancestors of Abraham, as some writers assert. Others are of opinion that the name is derived from the preposition *eber*, which signifies *beyond*, and that it was given by Chanaaneans to Abraham, because he came from beyond the River Euphrates into Syria. In after times, the same people were called Jews, from the name of Juda, the fourth son of Jacob, from whose race the promised Messiah was to come forth.

Q. After leaving the land of Egypt, whither did the Israelites proceed?

A. The Israelites, after setting out from Egypt, entered the desert, where they remained for forty years.

7. The Israelites, after having passed the Red Sea, entered the desert of Sur, where they had no water to drink but the bitter waters of Mara ; but Moses made them sweet by casting a tree into the waters. This tree was a figure of the wood of the Cross, which renders sweet and wholesome the bitter waters of tribulation. When they arrived at Elim, and from Elim proceeded to the desert of Sin, not having anything to eat, they murmured against Moses and Aaron, saying : " Why have you brought us into this desert to destroy all the multitude with famine ? " In the morning, God, in His mercy, sent them down manna ; it was small and white, and had all the appearance of hoar frost. And Moses said to them : " This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat ". During the forty years they wandered in the desert, this miraculous bread, a figure of the Eucharist, never failed them. Three months after setting out from Egypt, the Israelites came into the wilderness of Sinai. It was here, in the year 2313 of the world, that God, in the midst of thunder and lightning, gave them, through the hands of Moses, His Commandments. As we have already seen, the Lord from time to time appeared to His servants, and spoke to them about their origin, and the end for which they were created, and the means by which they were to arrive at this end. The Ten Commandments given to Moses on Mount Sinai was only the confirming and fuller development of the primitive religion handed down by Adam to the patriarchs, and by them to their descendants ; for it must be remarked, that in the commands given to Adam, as well as in the orders given to Moses, it is God Who speaks. The will of God, no matter through what agency it be conveyed, is always the rule of our acts.

Q. What became of the Israelites after having passed forty years in the desert ?

A. They entered the promised land under the leadership of Josue.

8. The Israelites had been now wandering for forty years in the desert, when the Lord commanded Moses to ascend the Mountain of Nebo. From its top He showed him the promised land of Chanaan, and said to him : " This is the land which I have promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob ; thou hast seen it, but shalt never enter it". And on that spot Moses died, in the hundred and twenty-sixth year of his age. Moses was taken out of life in sight of the promised land, without being able to enter it, in punishment of his diffidence in God. When ordered by Him in the desert to strike the rock, that water may issue from it, he struck it twice, as if he distrusted the power of God. Aaron, who equally as his brother showed some diffidence in God's power, was also prevented from entering the promised land, and died a short time before Moses, on Mount Hor, in the hundred and twenty-third year of his age.

9. Then the Lord said to Josue, the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim : " Arise, and pass over the Jordan. I will deliver to you every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon". As God commanded, Josue marched his people to the bank of the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who carried the ark no sooner touched the stream than the waters above ceased to flow, but were collected in a heap like a mountain, and the waters below flowed on as usual to the Dead Sea. A dry passage was then open, and all the people crossed over. Josue, after having successfully fought many battles against the kings of Chanaan, became master of the whole country, and made a division of it among the children of Israel, that they may possess it, according to the promise made by God to their fathers. The children of the tribe of Levi, set apart for the priesthood, had no

land, for the Lord had given to them the tithes and first fruits of the produce of the land. Forty-eight towns, called Levitical, were assigned them for their dwellings. Josue died in the hundred and tenth year of his age. The land of Chanaan was rich and fertile; it was afterwards called Palestine, a name which it bears to this day.

Q. By whom were the Israelites ruled after the death of Josue?

A. First by judges, and after by kings.

10. After the death of Josue, the Israelites forgot the great benefits which the Lord conferred on them, and the many miracles performed by Him. They entered into commercial relations with the idolaters, took wives from among their daughters, often practised themselves idolatrous rites. In punishment of their crimes, the Lord delivered them up into the hands of their enemies, from whom they received harsh treatment and much suffering, as Moses and Josue foretold. From time to time God raised up for them a deliverer, but this ungrateful people fell again and again; and again and again they were delivered into the hands of their enemies. The liberators raised up by God for the Israelites were called judges, because they rendered justice to the people on the part of God, and governed them in His name as magistrates. They assumed not the power of imposing taxes, neither did they take the title of kings nor pass laws.

11. The judges placed over the Israelites were fifteen in number—Othoniel, the son of Genez, of the tribe of Juda, who conquered Chusan, King of Mesopotamia; Aod, the son of Gera, of the tribe of Benjamin, who delivered the Israelites from the tyranny of Eglon, King of the Moabites, and slew him; Samgar, who gained a great many signal vic-

tories over the Philistines, and slew six hundred men with a ploughshare ; Debora, a holy prophetess, who, according to Baruc, routed the army of the Chanaaneans ; Gedeon, who with only three hundred chosen men vanquished the entire army of the Medianites ; Abimilech, an ambitious and cruel cyrant, appointed by God to chastise the Israelites for the crimes which they committed after the death of Gedeon ; Thola, of the tribe of Issachar, and cousin of Abimilech, but unlike him in disposition, for under his reign the Israelites felt happy ; Jair, who, though brave and valiant, was not able to rescue them from the hand of the Philistines and Ammonites ; Jephte, who gained a great victory over the Ammonites, and destroyed twenty of their cities ; Abesan, of the tribe of Juda ; Ahialon, of the tribe of Zabulon ; Abdon, whose government was not marked by any event of importance ; Samson, who delivered God's chosen people from the yoke of the Philistines, and slew a thousand of these men with the jaw-bone of an ass ; Heli, already vested with the dignity of high priest, and who, through his negligence in suppressing the disorders of his children, brought down the vengeance of God upon the Israelites, who were conquered by the Philistines in battle.

12. In this battle the two sons of Heli lost their lives, and the ark of the covenant was taken, which, when Heli heard, he fell back from his seat and died in an instant. The last judge of the Israelites was Samuel. Consecrated to the Lord when only three years old, as he advanced in age he increased in piety, and was pleasing to God and man. Being chosen by God to succeed Heli, he always walked in the presence of the Lord, and ruled God's people in a spirit of mildness and wisdom. As he advanced in years, and when he found himself unequal to his

weighty charge, he shared his authority with his sons. The sons had very little of the father's virtues; and the Israelites, wishing for a change in the form of government, urged that as a pretext against their rule, and demanded of Samuel, a king, that they may be governed as all other people. Samuel endeavoured to turn them aside from this novel project, but they persisted in their demands. Samuel then made his complaint to God, and God answered: "It is not thee that they reject, but Me, that I should not reign over them; hear what they say, and give them a king" (*I. Kings, viii. 7*). The Israelites were governed by judges for more than three hundred years.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE PASSAGE OF THE RED SEA.

* Unbelievers, in order to show that there was nothing miraculous in the passage of the Israelites across the Red Sea, and in the drowning of the Egyptians, say, that Moses might lead the Israelites over at low tide, without any miracle, while yet the Egyptians, not knowing the tide so well as he, might be drowned on its return. But how could Moses know the time of the flux and reflux of the Red Sea better than the Egyptians, who always lived in the country near it? Dc Castro, a mathematician who surveyed this sea with great exactness, informs us that there is no great flux or reflux in this part of the Red Sea, to give a colour to the supposition that the Egyptians could be drowned by the tide. The opinions of modern sceptics are vain and groundless, and the destruction of the Egyptian host cannot be accounted for in any other way than by that described by Moses.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What were the means Pharaoh used to destroy the Israelites?
2. How was Moses saved from the waters of the Nile?

3. What occurred to Moses when he got to Mount Horeb?
4. Of what sort were the plagues sent by God on the land?
5. What happened to Pharaoh in his pursuit of the Israelites?
6. How were the chosen people of God called?
7. How were they fed in the desert? Who gave Moses the Ten Commandments?
8. Had Moses and Aaron died before they entered the promised land?
9. How did Josue march his army across the Jordan?
10. After the death of Josue were the Israelites faithful to God?
11. Name the Judges appointed by God to govern Israel?
12. What happened Heli on hearing the death of his sons?

PRACTICE.

1. Under the trials and sufferings of this life look up to heaven and place your confidence in God, in imitation of Moses.
2. Learn from the penalty which Moses was obliged to undergo, for apparently a trivial transgression, the hatred in which God holds disobedience.

PRAYER.

O my God! we return Thee thanks for the many and great miracles which Thou hast performed in favour of Thy chosen people, and for Thy great mercy in pardoning their many disloyalties, and bringing them into the land of promise. Lead us, O Lord, into heaven, the true land of promise, where we shall love and praise Thee for endless ages. Amen.

CHAPTER XXI.

CONTINUATION OF THE HISTORY OF THE JEWS.

- Q. Who were the first kings appointed to govern the Israelites?
- A. Saul, David, and Solomon.
1. To the request of the Israelites that they should

be governed by a king, the Lord consented. Saul, the son of Cis, of the tribe of Benjamin, was appointed king over them, in the year of the world 2909. The prophet Samuel, knowing, by divine revelation, that Saul was the person selected by God to reign over Israel, consecrated him king, by pouring a small vial of oil on his head. He was distinguished for beauty of person and strength of body, as also for sweetness of disposition and gentleness of manner, when he commenced his reign. But the dignity to which he was raised made a change in his character. He became proud, fiery, and unmindful of the orders of the Lord. He rejected the word of God, and God, in turn, rejected him, and deprived him of his kingdom. In an engagement with the Philistines he received a deadly wound, and still breathing, he fell upon the point of his sword, and expired.

2. David, the son of Isai, or Jesse, of the tribe of Juda, and born at Bethlehem, was chosen by God to succeed Saul. He was yet a young shepherd, when Samuel was ordered by God to anoint him king; and during Saul's life he gained a great victory over the formidable Goliah, whom he slew by a stone flung from a sling. After the death of Saul, in the year 2949, he mounted the throne. He took Jerusalem, and made that city the capital of his empire, and the seat of religion. Glory and magnificence surrounded him, for the God of armies was with him. However, by two dreadful crimes, adultery and murder, which he committed, he sullied his reign, and rendered himself displeasing to God. When he humbled himself and did penance, God forgave him his sins, but inflicted severe temporal punishments upon him. After having spent the latter part of his life in the fear of God, during which he composed the seven beautiful and Penitential Psalms, expressive of

the afflictions and sorrow of his heart, he died in a holy manner, and perfectly reconciled with the Lord, in the year of the world 2989. He reigned over Israel for forty years.

3. After the death of David, Solomon, his son, ascended the throne. He was at first faithful in his duty to God, and for many years walked in the way of His commandments. One night God appeared to him in a dream, and said to him : " Ask what thou wilt that I should give thee". " Lord God", answered Solomon, " give to Thy servant an understanding heart to judge Thy people, and discern between good and evil". God was pleased with his prayer, and granted him wisdom, such as had never been granted to any man before or since, and to wisdom added riches and glory greater than any king had ever possessed before. His subjects participated in his immense wealth ; for each one, as the Scripture tells us, reposed without fear under the shade of his own fig-tree. Gold was scattered about in such profusion that few concerned themselves about it, and silver was as plenty as the stones that lay around. For the supply of his table Solomon had a thousand bushels of fine flour, and two thousand bushels of meal ; thirty oxen and a hundred sheep, besides a great number of stags, roebucks, buffles, and fatted fowls. He had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand for the saddle. Solomon had scarcely ascended the throne when an opportunity presented itself of displaying the wisdom which God had bestowed on him. Two women, of evil repute, came before him to decide a dispute between them. They both laid claim to a male child, one positively asserting that the child belonged to her, and the other strenuously denying it. There was no witness to appeal to on the subject, and nothing could be collected in favour

of one side more than of the other. The king sent for a sword, ordered the child to be divided into two, and half to be given to one and half to the other. The woman who had no right to the child remained silent and indifferent during the sentence, but the real mother wept at the fate of the child, and cried out: "I beseech thee, my lord, give her the child alive, and do not kill it". This burst of feeling proved her to be the mother of the child, and Solomon ordered him to be given to her (*III. Kings, iii.*).

4. Before David died, he recommended his son to build a temple to the living God, and minutely described to him the plan on which it was to be built. In accordance with his father's pious wishes, Solomon commenced and completed that magnificent structure —one of the wonders of the world. Thirty thousand of the ablest workmen were employed at it; eighty thousand men were engaged at hewing out the stones, and preparing them for the masons, and seventy thousand more were constantly employed in carrying the necessary materials for it. Besides these, there were three thousand three hundred overseers, for inspecting the different parts of it, and directing the whole work. Solomon laid the foundation of the temple in the fourth year of his reign, and completed it in the eleventh, in the year 3000 of the world. It was the first temple erected by man to the worship of the true God. In the latter part of his life, Solomon, the once chosen favourite of heaven, sunk into the depths of lust, and from lust into idolatry. He married a thousand wives, many of whom were idolaters; and to please them he ordered temples to be raised to their idols. The Lord became irritated against him, appeared to him, and denounced heavy judgments against him for his crimes: "Because", said the Lord to him, "thou hast done this, and hast not kept my covenant

and my precepts, which I have commanded thee, I will divide and rend thy kingdom, and will give it to thy servant". After having ruled Israel forty years, Solomon slept with his fathers in the fifty-ninth year of his age, and was buried in Jerusalem, the city of David, leaving the world in doubt whether he died the friend or enemy of God—the object of His love or hatred.

Q. Under what king did the tribes separate themselves from the house of David?

A. Under Roboam the son of Solomon.

5. Solomon was succeeded by his son Roboam, who by his imprudence and severity, rent the empire already shaken through the fault of his father. Solomon, to meet his vast expenses, had laid heavy taxes on his subjects. The people petitioned Roboam to be relieved from the heavy burthen. The old and experienced counselled Roboam to give a favourable answer to the people on the subject of their petition. The young and ambitious courtiers who were brought up with him, gave him that advice which they thought would be most welcome to him; they told him it would be derogatory to his rank and dignity to make any concession to his people. Roboam followed the advice of the young and inexperienced, and answered the deputies of his people in imperious language. The people broke out into open revolt, and during the ferment ten tribes withdrew their allegiance from the house of David, and chose for their king, Jeroboam, of the tribe of Ephraim. Only two tribes—the tribe of Juda, the most considerable, and the tribe of Benjamin—remained faithful to Roboam. The kingdom was now divided into that of Juda and that of Israel. The capital of Israel was Samaria. Jeroboam dreaded the return of his subjects to the rule of Roboam. That they might, when going to

offer sacrifices, have no commerce with those Jews subject to Roboam, he made two golden calves for them ; and that these differences with the Jews of Jerusalem might be more irreconcileable, he induced his subjects to adore them.

6. The kingdom of Israel did not last long, for the kings who ruled it were remarkable for their impiety. In the year of the world 3126, in the reign of Osse, Salmanazar, King of Assyria, made himself master of Samaria, and brought all its people captive into Niniveh. The ten tribes composing the kingdom of Israel were scattered over the different countries of Asia, and could never after be brought together to form a distinct nation. The kingdom of Juda yet remained in all its glory and splendour during a hundred and thirty years that followed the dispersion of the ten tribes and the destruction of the kingdom of Israel. But the Jews having filled up the measure of their iniquities, the justice of God burst at last over their heads, and the kingdom of Juda, like the kingdom of Israel, was led into captivity. In the reign of Sedecias, in the year of the world 3417, Nabuchodonozor, King of Babylon, at the head of his army, arrived at the walls of Jerusalem, and sat down before it. After a protracted siege of two years, the city was taken, the magnificent temple erected by Solomon was burned to the ground, and Jerusalem became a heap of ruins. Nabuchodonozor plucked out the eyes of Sedecias, and carried him away loaded with chains into Babylon.*

7. The captivity of the Jews in Babylon continued seventy years. At the expiration of that time Cyrus, King of Persia, having conquered the King of Babylon, allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem in the year of the world 3488, and to rebuild the temple. He also issued an edict that all the sacred vessels which Nabuchodonozor carried away should be brought

back to be used in the divine service for which they were first designed. In consequence of this edict upwards of forty-two thousand Jews—the others remained in Babylon—marched back into Judea under the conduct of Josue, the high priest, and of Zorobabel, chief of the tribe of Juda, and laid the foundations of a new temple on the very site of the old. The progress of the building met with many interruptions from the Samaritans—the ancient enemies of Juda and Benjamin—and the temple was not entirely finished until the sixth year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes. Some years after, Artaxerxes, King of Persia, authorised his cup-bearer, Nehemias, to rebuild the walls of the temple of Jerusalem. This was the twentieth year of Artaxerxes' reign, and from this epoch begins the date of Daniel's seventy weeks of years. Nehemias, after taking three days to review the broken walls and ruins of the city, called together the priests, magistrates, and nobles of his city, and as an encouragement to them to build up the walls of Jerusalem, produced the royal licence which he received from Artaxerxes. The work was immediately undertaken, and with such ardour did they proceed that the new walls were completed in fifty-two days, and the city of Jerusalem was again surrounded with bulwarks, in the year 454 before Christ.

8. The Jews, after their return to Jerusalem, were governed by pontiffs, clothed with supreme authority, but they remained tributary to the Persians. Darius, King of Persia, having been conquered by Alexander the Great, Judea passed into the hands of this new conqueror, who entered Jerusalem, and with every mark of respect visited the temple, where the holy books in which his victories had been announced were shown to him. Josephus, the Jewish historian, relates this fact. After the death of Alexander, Judea

was alternately ruled by the Egyptians and Syrians. At first the Jews were treated with mildness and clemency by the Syrians, but in course of time suffered at their hands the direst persecutions. It was then that Judas Machabeus, the son of a holy priest named Mathathias, took up arms, and marched against Antiochus, King of Syria ; and although his forces were far inferior in numbers to those of Syria, he gave them battle, defeated, and forced them to retreat with great loss ; thus delivering his country from the heavy yoke under which it had groaned. After the death of Judas Machabeus, in the year of the world 3843, and in the year before Christ 161, Jonathas, his brother, was chosen to fill his place, and fight the battles of Israel. Jonathas was succeeded by another brother, Simon, one of the five brave sons of Mathathias. Simon rendered his country the most signal service, and after having governed the Jewish nation with great wisdom and valour for eighty years, was deprived of his life by Ptolemy, his son-in-law.

9. The successors of Simon, the last of the illustrious Machabees, were John Hyrcanus, and Aristobulus I., who assumed the crown and title of king. After the death of Aristobulus, Alexander Janneus, his son, ascended the throne. He died without any remarkable event being recorded of him, and left two sons, Hyrcanus II., and Aristobulus II., who warmly disputed the possession of the throne. Under the pretext of establishing peace between both brothers, but in reality with the design of uniting the province of Judea to the Roman Empire, Pompey, the Roman general, entered that province. He made Judea tributary to Rome. Not long after, Herod, an Idumean by birth, and, consequently of a foreign race, seized on the throne of Judea, and the usurpation was at once ratified by the Roman Senate, and Herod was acknowledged King of Jerusalem. The better

to establish his power, he put to death the old king, Hyrcanus, the young Aristobulus, his nephew, and Mariamne, his sister, whom Herod had espoused some time before. He also extinguished in their blood the family of the Machabees, who, during a hundred and twenty-nine years, gave rulers to Judea. In the thirty-seventh year of King Herod's reign, which was the four thousandth of the world, JESUS CHRIST, the Saviour of Men, was born in Bethlehem, a town of Judea.

Q. During all this time did God renew the promises that He had made to the patriarchs, of sending a Saviour to redeem the world?

Q. Yes, from the time of Solomon, to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, God renewed the promise through the mouths of His prophets.

10. Prophet means a holy man inspired by God, who has the gift of foretelling future events. From the time of Solomon, the son of David, to the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem, under the inspection of Nehemias, many prophets appeared who announced the coming of the Redeemer, formerly promised by God to Adam, and then to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and also the precise time of His coming. The most celebrated of these were Isaia, Jeremias, Zachary, and Daniel. Isaia foretold that the Messiah would be born of a virgin: "A virgin shall conceive and shall bring forth". Jeremias predicted, many years before the event, all the pains, sorrows, and opprobrium which the Saviour was to endure; and that in a manner so precise and accurate, as to lead one to suppose that he had been an eye-witness of the sufferings of our Redeemer: "There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness: Despised and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with infirmity: surely He hath borne

our infirmities, and carried our sorrows, and we have thought Him as it were a leper, and as One struck by God, and afflicted" (*Isaias*, liii.).

11. Daniel foretold the precise time of the coming of the Messiah. He announced that "seventy weeks" should elapse from the publication of the edict for the rebuilding of the city and temple of Jerusalem, to the coming of Christ; that in the middle of the "seventieth week", the Messiah should be put to death. The prophet's "weeks" are understood, by all interpreters of the Holy Scriptures, to include years for days; so that sixty-nine weeks of years amount to four hundred and eighty-three years. The edict for rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem was made by Artaxerxes in the twentieth year of his reign, which was the year of the world 3548. Now, if to 3548 we add Daniel's "weeks of years", 483, the number will be 4031, which is the year in which Christ was baptized by St. John, and commenced His public life; and that was about three years and three months—the middle of the last seventieth week—before He died on the cross. So there is not a circumstance of the birth, life, and death of Jesus Christ which was not accurately foretold by the prophets of God.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE FEAST OF BALTASSAR.

* Baltassar made a sumptuous feast, and entertained at his table a thousand of his nobles, at which every one drank according to his age. Having partaken somewhat too freely of the wine, he ordered the sacred vessels, which Nabuchodonosor had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, to be brought into the banqueting hall. He and his officers and his wives and concubines drank out of them, and at the

same time sounded forth the praises of their idols and graven gods. In the height of their revelry, fingers of a man's hand, as it were, appeared on the wall, writing some unintelligible words. The king beheld the fingers writing, and his countenance grew pale, and his heart throbbed, and through fear his knees struck against each other. Guilt and remorse at once seized on his soul. He cried aloud for his wise men to come and remove his fears by an explanation of the writing. Amongst those sent for was the prophet Daniel, and he alone could read the writing on the wall. Daniel told Baltassar that the words on the wall—*Mane, Thekel, Phares*—implied his condemnation. "This is the meaning of them", said he: "*Mane*, God hath numbered the days of thy kingdom, and the number is now finished. *Thekel*, thou art weighed in the balance, and art found wanting. *Phares*, thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians". On that very night Baltassar was surprised in his palace by Cyrus, and at once put to death.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What was the character of Saul, the first King of Israel?
2. Was David, the successor of Saul, guilty of any great crimes?
3. How did Solomon display his wisdom on one occasion?
4. How many men were engaged at the building of the temple?
5. What was the cause of the division of the kingdom of Israel?
6. By whom was the temple of Jerusalem destroyed?
7. By whom were the walls of Jerusalem rebuilt?
8. By whom was Jerusalem delivered from the Persians?
9. Who was the first who ruled Judea for the Romans?
10. Was the coming of our Redeemer foretold by the prophets?
11. What was the nature of the prophecy of Daniel?

PRACTICE.

1. Let the fall of Solomon be a warning to you, to avoid all those who may lead you into sin.
2. Like the Machabees, be always ready to battle for your

faith, and let no difficulties ever dishearten you from embracing the service of Jesus.

PRAYER.

O my God! I thank Thee for all Thou hast done for my salvation. Grant that I may always obey Thy laws, and that my conduct may never belie my faith. Amen.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE ANNUNCIATION, AND THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

Q. On what day did Christ become man?

A. On the twenty-fifth of March, the day of the Annunciation, *He was conceived by the Holy Ghost.*

1. In accordance with the promise that God, from time to time, made, of sending one who would "crush the serpent's head", and redeem mankind; His only Son, on the twenty-fifth March, took flesh, like ours, in the chaste womb of the Virgin Mary, by the operation of the Holy Ghost. The feast of the "Annunciation", celebrated at first by particular churches, soon extended itself through the universal Church, and was sanctioned by the tenth Council of Toledo, in the year 656. In the East it was observed in the earliest times, and was confirmed as a general feast in the Council of Constantinople, held in the year 692. The twenty-fifth of March was the day fixed on for its celebration; "for", says St. Augustine, "it is an old tradition, adopted by the Church, that the Incarnation of the Word took place on the twenty-fifth of the month of March".

Q. Why is it called the day of the Annunciation?

A. Because on that day the Angel Gabriel announced to the Virgin Mary: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus" (*Luke*, i. 31).

2. The day on which the Son of God was conceived in the Blessed Virgin's womb, and was made Man, is "called the day of the Annunciation", because it was on that day that God sent the Angel Gabriel, one of the seven Angels who stand at His right hand, to the city of Nazareth, in Galilee, to announce to a virgin, named Mary, the joyful news that she had been chosen to be the mother of God's only Son. The words that the Angel addressed to her, as she was praying, were these: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou amongst women". When Mary heard these words, she was greatly troubled; and, as the Scriptures tell us, she "thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be". So humble was she—so poor was the opinion she entertained of herself—that she became confused at hearing from an angel, that she was "full of grace", and "blessed amongst women". To remove these fears the Angel said to her: "Fear not, Mary; for thou hast found grace with God". And he continued telling her how God the Son was to become man, and how great and powerful He should be, and how extensive His reign was to be, and how there should be no end to His kingdom, and that this great King had made choice of her as His mother: "Thou shalt bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus: He shall be great, and He shall be called the Son of the Most High".

3. The virgin listened to the Angel with great at-

tention, and the wonderful things he promised somewhat surprised her, for, being a virgin, she could not well understand how they could be performed. "How shall this be done", said she to the Angel, "because I know not man?" The Angel, in reply, assured her that no concurrence of man was required, for that she was to conceive in a miraculous way, through the power of the Holy Ghost: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God". And to convince her that nothing was impossible to God, the Angel went on to tell Mary what had happened to her cousin Elizabeth, who was very old, and, though married many years, had no children, yet was soon to have a son: "And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren". Mary being thus informed of what she wished to know, and having learned the manner in which the great mystery of the "Incarnation" was to be brought about, gave her consent in words expressive of great humility and submission to God's appointment: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it done to me according to thy word" (*Luke*, i. 38). And at that very moment, when Mary had given her consent, the Holy Ghost created the body and soul of Jesus Christ. Christ became Man in her womb, without any loss to her virginal purity, and thus took place the wonderful mystery of the "Incarnation". The Angel having completed his commission, took his leave of Mary, and returned to his bright home in heaven.

Q. On what day was Christ born of the Virgin Mary?

A. On Christmas Day, in a stable at Bethlehem.

4. Nine months after His conception in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, Jesus Christ made His appearance in the world. On the 25th of December, on Sunday morning, He was born, and ushered into the world at a most inclement season of the year, in the middle of the longest night, in a place where no comfortable things could be procured, nor any of those things necessary on such occasions could be found. As was foretold by the prophet Micheas, Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, although His parents were of Nazareth, a town in Galilee. The reason why Bethlehem became the birthplace of Jesus Christ was this. About that time lived Cæsar Augustus, a Roman emperor, who ruled almost the whole world. That great prince, being very ambitious and proud, wished to know the number of his subjects living in each country. So he published an edict by which all in every province were to be enrolled in the town of their ancestors. In obedience to that edict, everybody went to his own city to be enrolled. Joseph and Mary went from Nazareth, their place of residence, to Bethlehem, near Jerusalem, which was called the city of David. As they were of the family of King David, Bethlehem was the town in which they were to be enrolled. It was in winter when they set out from Nazareth; and as the roads were rough and broken up by the torrents peculiar to that season, their journey was very tedious, and to Mary very painful.

5. When they reached Bethlehem every house was full of the people who had come to be enrolled. The inns, as the Scripture says, were filled with strangers. All were accommodated, except Joseph and Mary, who, as they were poor, were repulsed from every door. In vain they asked a night's lodging for the love of God; and they had often the mortification to behold the very door, that was closed against them,

opened to richer applicants. At last, tired from their long journey, and seeing that there was no hope of receiving shelter in Bethlehem, they left the town, and when they got into the open country they perceived a stable or shed, where cows or oxen were kept, and they entered the mean and lonely hovel, and there screened themselves as well as they could against the cold blasts of a bleak December night. This was the place in which Mary, in the middle of the longest night, brought forth Him who was to be called the Son of the Most High. When He was born, she wrapped Him up in swaddling-clothes, and placed Him in a manger, between an ox and an ass.

6. The place in which our Redeemer was born is about two hundred paces to the south of Bethlehem. It is a cave in the side of a rock, and is about forty feet in length, by twelve in width at the entrance, but becomes narrower towards the roof. The vault is supported by three pillars of porphyry. In the centre there is a niche intersected by an altar, on which the Holy Sacrifice is offered up. This altar is lighted up by thirty-five lamps—one of them, and that the richest, being the gift of Louis XII., King of France. It is believed that it was in this recess that the Holy Virgin brought forth the Son of God. This part of the grotto is lined with white marble, incrusted with jasper; and around it is a circle of silver, radiating like the sun, with the following inscription : *Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est* :—Here was born Jesus Christ, of the Virgin Mary. The Infant, when born, was laid in a sort of crib, formed of wood. This precious relic was long since transported to Rome, and the place in which it has been laid is encrusted with marble.

Q. To whom was the birth of Jesus Christ first announced ?

A. It was announced by Angels to poor shepherds who were watching their flocks in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem.

7. Jesus Christ had no sooner been born, than His appearance on this world was made known by an Angel of the Lord. The joyful news was not communicated at first to mighty princes and learned doctors, but to some good, holy, and simple-minded shepherds. Jesus was born in a poor, mean stable, for the consolation of those who live in poverty, and who are subject to all the ills and evils of life ; and it was the poor and humble that were chosen to be first witnesses of this glorious event : “ And there were in the same country shepherds watching and keeping the night watches over their flocks, and behold an Angel of the Lord stood by them, and the brightness of God shone round about them, and they feared with a great fear ” (*Luke*, ii. 9). The shepherds were very much frightened at the great brightness that shone around them, and looked at the Angel with fear and wonder. But the Angel said to them in a gentle voice—“ Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people. For this day is born to you a Saviour, who is Christ our Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you : you shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling-cloths and laid in a manger ”. The Angel had no sooner ceased speaking, than he was joined by an innumerable troop of other Angels, who filled the clear, cold air with this canticle : “ Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will ” ; that is, to those who have an upright heart and a sincere desire of pleasing Him. When the heavenly sounds had died away, the shepherds, forgetful of their fears, spoke in a tone of confidence, “ and said one to another, let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see this word that has come to pass, which the Lord has shown to us ”.

8. The shepherds then arose, and set off with all speed to Bethlehem. Recollecting that the Angel

had said to them that they should find the Infant in a manger, they did not mind looking for houses of an imposing appearance, but at once proceeded, as if conducted by the hand of God, to the poor and lowly dwelling, where Joseph and Mary had taken up their looking. When they entered the place they found the Holy Babe lying in a manger, as the Angel had described, and the mother inclining over her newly born, paying adoration to Him with the deepest reverence and the most profound humility. Above them Joseph was bowing down his venerable head, and looking with admiration on his adopted Son, who was no other than God. Here is the place, said the shepherds ; and prostrating themselves before the manger of the King of kings, they offered to the poor and infant God the poor man's gift and the poor man's homage. In that cold, poor, and comfortless place was Jesus, the God of heaven, laid, and around Him were the very beasts of the field! Oh ! what a lesson is taught us by the manger! When we behold the King of heaven and earth clothed in rags, and lying in a wretched stable, how comes it that we can complain of poverty and wretchedness ? From that manger Jesus seems to say to us : See how poor I have become for you—how, in the very first stage of My existence, I have to encounter the severe cold of a winter's night ! Will you, then, repine, because you have to bear the inconveniences of hunger and cold ? Will you be continually longing for the comforts and riches of the world, and complaining when you are deprived of the pleasures and enjoyments of life ?*

9. The shepherds, being filled with astonishment at what they had seen, at once communicated the glad tidings to others, and they were listened to with equal wonder and surprise : " And all that heard wondered ; and at those things that were

told them by the shepherds". But Mary was fixed in meditation upon her Son, for she listened to the words that were spoken of Him, drinking in every syllable, and engraving them indelibly on her heart : she "kept these words, pondering them in her heart". Their duty over, and their mission terminated, the shepherds of Juda retired glorifying God, and making known through the mountains the wonders of that blessed night. In imitation of the poor shepherds, let us, too, dear children, praise and glorify God for His great love in sending His only beloved Son to redeem and save us. Let us never forget the lesson inculcated by the appearance of Jesus Christ in a cold stable.

10. Master of the world, and all that the world holds, He could, if He pleased, make His appearance in a splendid palace, surrounded with all the comforts and luxuries of life ; having all the treasures of the world at His command, He could make all those treasures subservient to His own purpose, and present Himself at His birth, if He pleased, in a place suited to His great majesty ; but this would not be in accordance with the designs He had in view in becoming man. He came on earth to inculcate the great lessons of poverty and humility, and so a stable was the scene of His birth, and He was ushered into the world in cold and distress. Lying in the manger, Jesus preached to the rich to despise the pleasures and vanities of the world, and not to fix their affections on glory and wealth, but to make for themselves friends of the "mammon of iniquity", by assisting the distressed. The lesson taught the poor by Jesus in the manger is, to bear patiently with the state in which Providence has placed them ; to console themselves with the reflection, that by their sufferings and afflictions they bear a closer resemblance than the rich to the Infant Saviour ;

that though their privations be great, their lot miserable—though they have to contend with all the ills of life—though destitution and misery be theirs, yet that such was the state the Lord had chosen for Himself. He was born in poverty, He lived in poverty, and He died in poverty.

Q. On what day was Jesus Christ circumcised?

A. He was circumcised on the eighth day after His birth and received the name of Jesus.

11. Circumcision was a ceremony prescribed by God to Abraham as a sign of the covenant which had been entered into between Himself and Abraham, and which was to be the distinctive mark of all Abraham's descendants. In compliance with the orders of God, every male child was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. Jesus Christ, who was the Son of God, was not bound to comply with this law; He had no necessity of bearing on His sacred flesh the sign of the covenant with His Father, for He was in Him—He and the Father were one. A law, by which, according to St. Augustine and many other holy Fathers, the stain of original sin was removed before the institution of baptism, could not bind Him who had no sin. He was never conceived in iniquity—He was exempt from all sin, and so was dispensed from the law of circumcision. But as He came on earth not to destroy the law but to perfect it, He, like all the other Hebrew children, subjected Himself to this law, wishing thereby to teach us to bow down with submission and docility to the commands of God, and not, under vain pretexts, to consider ourselves exempt from their performance.

12. The Son of God having been "circumcised", was called Jesus, that is, the Saviour—a name which was given Him by the Angel when he announced to the Virgin that she was to conceive. The name of

Jesus fully expresses all His saving power—His goodness, mercy, and charity. At this name, we are told by St. Paul, “that every knee shall bow, of those that are in heaven, on the earth, and under the earth”. We should then always pronounce it with the greatest respect. Let this beautiful name, dear children, be ever in your mouth—in sadness and in joy, awaking in the morning and lying down at night. This name will gladden your hearts, will purify your lips, and diffuse a sweetness in your souls.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

* The village of Bethlehem is beautifully situated on an eminence about six miles south-east of Jerusalem, in a district watered by a small rivulet, and richly covered with olives, vines, and fig trees. The pious Empress Helen built a handsome church in the form of a cross, over the grotto in which our Saviour was born, which remains to this day. The church was much embellished by Constantine, and the interior adorned with mosaic work. The body of the church is supported by forty white marble Corinthian columns, in four rows. Connected with the building are Latin, Greek, and Armenian convents, each having its several doors opening into the chapel of the Holy Manger. The right of guarding the Holy Places often changed hands from the Greeks to the Latins, and has been a source of much jealousy between the monks of both Churches. The dispute regarding the right to the Holy Places was the origin of the war between England and Russia in the year 1854. In Bethlehem are still pointed out the house of Simeon, the tomb of Rachel, the chapel of St. Joseph, and that of the Holy Innocents.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. On what day is the feast of the Annunciation celebrated?
2. In what terms did the Angel address the Blessed Virgin?

3. Was the Blessed Virgin surprised at the salutation of the Angel?
4. Why was Christ born in Bethlehem, and not in Nazareth?
5. Describe the circumstances connected with the birth of Jesus.
6. Describe the place in which our Redeemer was born.
7. In what way were the shepherds informed of the birth of Christ?
8. What did the shepherds behold on entering the stable?
9. Did the shepherds make known to others the birth of Jesus Christ?
10. What is the lesson taught us by Jesus in the manger?
11. Why did Jesus submit to the rite of circumcision?
12. What is signified by the word Jesus?

PRACTICE.

1. Often thank the Father of mercies for having given His only Son to redeem you. 2. When you are suffering hunger or cold, think of Jesus Christ lying in a cold stable through love for you. 3. Often recite, with sentiments of piety, the hymn of the Angels: "Glory be to God in the highest".

PRAYER.

O my God! Who art all love, we give Thee thanks for having sent the long-promised and long-expected Saviour. Grant that we may never reject Him as the Jews did, but may always recollect that it was to save us from the consequences of sin, and to present Himself to us as a model of patience and resignation, that He was born in poverty, and was obliged to submit to all its inconveniences. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ON THE ADORATION OF JESUS CHRIST BY THE MAGI,
AND ON HIS PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE.

Q. On what day was Jesus Christ adored by the Magi ?

A. On the day of the Epiphany, commonly called twelfth day.

I. The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ had scarcely been announced to the poor shepherds, when it was made known by the appearance of a star to the Magi, or wise men of the East. The word *magi* means wise and learned ; and it is generally supposed that the Magi, who came from the East, probably from Arabia and Chaldea, to adore the infant God, were very rich and powerful personages. A great many writers are of opinion that they were kings. A very old tradition bestows on the three Magi the names of Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. And it is under these names that they are venerated in the Church of Cologne, which lays claim to the possession of their relics. About the time of the birth of Jesus Christ, these three Magi, deeply learned in the science of astronomy, one night discovered a star, much larger and brighter than any of the other stars. As they were not ignorant that an old prophet named Balaam, had foretold that about this time a divine child should be born, who would redeem the world, and that his appearance should be made known by the sudden appearance of a bright and very extraordinary star, they had no doubt of the birth of the great Redeemer, and they set out at once for Jerusalem to adore Him. When they entered on their journey, they perceived the star shining over their heads, and moving on before them, as a guide pointing out the way. When they

arrived at Jerusalem, the star disappeared, and then they began to ask all they met: "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East, and we are come to adore Him".

2. The news of a king lately born is soon spread through Jerusalem, and the whole city is at once in commotion. Herod, knowing that his title to the crown was conferred on him by the Romans, and not by the Jews, experienced great alarm at the inquiry made by the Magi, lest the child should become his rival, and sooner or later pull the crown from his head. He at once called together the priests and the doctors of the law, to tell him in what place it was said "Christ should be born". The priests and scribes told him that the prophets had said that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. Then Herod having sent for the Magi, and having learned from them the precise time of the star's appearance, sent them to Bethlehem, saying to them: "Go, and diligently inquire after the Child, and when you have found Him bring me word again, that I also may come and adore Him". This was altogether a pretence on the part of this cruel and haughty prince. He had no idea of paying Him adoration; his real object in finding Him out was, that he might the more easily put Him to death.

3. The Magi having politely bowed to Herod, left the city and entered on the way to Bethlehem. They were no sooner out of Jerusalem, than the star appeared again and went before them as a guide. When they arrived at Bethlehem it stopped its course, and stood still over the place where the infant Jesus lay. Then the Magi rejoicing entered the house, and seeing Jesus in the arms of His mother, they fell upon their knees and adored their God. Then opening their treasures, they presented the Holy Babe with

their offerings of gold, frankincense, and myrrh : gold, as to a king ; frankincense, as to a God ; and myrrh, as to a man. According to the tradition to which we have alluded above, Gaspar offered the gold, Melchior offered the frankincense, and Balthazar offered the myrrh. The Magi having paid their adorations to Jesus Christ, began to think of returning to Herod, that he too might come and adore the infant God ; but God warned them in their sleep not to go back to that wicked king ; and so they returned another way to their own country, and disappointed the cruel prince in his murderous designs on the child.

Q. In what place, and at what time, did the Magi adore Jesus Christ ?

A. In the stable in which He was born, and on the thirteenth day after His birth.

4. It is generally believed, and with good grounds, that it was in the stable in which Jesus Christ was born that the Magi paid Him these acts of adoration. "The Child Jesus", says St. John Chrysostom, "is adored in the manger and in the stable by the Magi". St. Cyprian and St. Augustine say that it was in a poor shed that the Magi found, recognised, and adored the King of kings. St. Augustine and St. Thomas are of opinion, that the adoration of Jesus Christ by the Magi took place on the thirteenth day after His birth. The Church appears to adopt that opinion, by commemorating that great mystery on the 6th day of January. On this subject, Sardini, a learned writer, makes this remark : "The Magi, even mounted on dromedaries, could not take less than eight days in travelling from Arabia Felix to Jerusalem. Preparations for the journey, and the stay at Jerusalem by their interviews with Herod, must have taken four or five days more". The 6th of

January, the day on which the Church commemorates the adoration of Jesus Christ by the Magi, is called the Feast of the Epiphany. *Epiphany* means manifestation, and this feast is so called, because it was on that day that Jesus Christ manifested Himself to the Gentiles, a people distinguished from the Jews, or the people of God. In France this feast is called the *kings' day*, because, as we have before said, it is generally believed that the Magi who adored Jesus Christ were kings.

Q. On what day was Jesus Christ presented in the Temple?

A. On the fortieth day after His birth, named the day of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin, and commonly called Candlemas Day.

5. There was an old law made by God for the Jewish nation, that every first-born child should be offered up to God in the Temple by the parents, and redeemed by the offering of some living creature. If the parents were rich, a lamb should be offered ; and if poor, a pair of pigeons, or two turtle doves. At the end of forty days, Mary repaired to the temple, that she might fulfil this law. Though Mary was descended from the kings of Judea, she was too poor to offer a lamb ; and Jesus, to whom everything belonged, was redeemed by a pair of doves ! At the time that the Blessed Virgin presented her Son in the temple, she herself submitted to another law of Moses, by which all women who had brought forth a child were, for a time, considered unclean, and prohibited from touching anything consecrated to the Lord. If they brought forth a son they were considered unclean for forty days ; and if a daughter, the time was extended to eighty days. At the expiration of this time, they repaired to the temple for their purification, and offered the sacrifices prescribed by

the law. Assuredly this law did not oblige the Blessed Virgin—she well knew from its words that it could not bind her—for she was not an ordinary mother. Her purity, so far from being sullied by the birth of Jesus Christ, was only rendered brighter by His virtue. But as the public was not then acquainted with her privileges, submit to it she would, that she might give an example of obedience and humility. From Mary's conduct on this occasion, Christian mothers should learn to offer their children to God from their earliest years, and should, too, learn to pay to God the tribute of praise and thanksgiving before His holy altar, after they have brought forth children. When they can with safety leave their houses, the first visit should be to the Lord's temple, to return Him thanks for the happy delivery, and to pray to Him that He may shower down His blessings on themselves and their children.

6. At that time there lived an old man in Jerusalem called Simeon; and as soon as Joseph and Mary had entered the porch of the temple, they were met by this good old man, who had been for many years hoping that before his death he might see the Saviour, for he had received a promise from the Holy Spirit that he should not die until he had seen the Anointed of the Lord. So when he met the parents bringing the child Jesus, he took the infant in his arms, and cried out in a transport of joy: "Now, O Lord! dost Thou dismiss Thy servant, according to Thy word, in peace, because my eyes have seen Thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people: a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of Thy people, Israel" (*St. Luke*, ii. 29). Then he foretold to Mary, that one day a sword of sorrow should pierce her heart, from witnessing the sufferings of her Son. After Jesus had been presented in the temple, Joseph and Mary returned home with Him.

The Presentation of Jesus, and the Purification of Mary, is kept as a feast by the Church on the 2nd of February, called the Purification of the Blessed Virgin. This day is also called Candlemas Day, from the candles blessed at the Mass, and put into the hands of the priest and people, which they carry in procession round the church, as the holy Simeon carried in his arms the infant Jesus. The custom of bearing lighted candles on the Feast of the Purification was introduced by Pope Gelasius, after he had abolished the *lupercales*, or feast in honour of the god Pan, which had been celebrated in the month of February.

Q. Was not Jesus Christ, even in His infancy, exposed to the persecution of Herod, King of the Jews?

A. Yes; King Herod, wishing to destroy the infant Jesus, gave orders that all the male children in Bethlehem, who were two years old and under two, should be put to death.

7. What a life was that, dear children, of our adorable Redeemer! He was, as we have already seen, born in poverty and misery; and a few days after His birth His blood began to flow under the knife of circumcision. These were the first fruits of that life of humiliation and of sorrow, which He was to lead upon this world. The "contradiction", foretold by Simeon, on the day of His presentation in the Temple, soon followed. King Herod, that jealous and ambitious prince, finding that the Magi were unmindful of his orders, and did not return, but went home another way, foamed with rage, and resolved that Jesus should not escape out of his hands, but should die at once. To succeed in his design, he issued an order—the most inhuman order that a tyrant could issue—that all the male children, two years old and under, in Bethlehem and the surrounding country, should be put to death. His own son,

even, was not spared in this general massacre—a circumstance which made the Emperor Augustus say *that it was better to be Herod's hog than his son*. In issuing this cruel order, he thought that he took the most effectual way of destroying the infant, and of preventing Him from ever becoming King of the Jews. But God defeated his wicked intentions; for, one night when the holy family—Joseph, Mary, and Jesus—were asleep, an Angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph, and said to him: “Arise, and take the Child and His mother, and fly into Egypt, and stay there until I shall tell thee; for, it will come to pass that Herod will seek the Child to destroy Him”.

8. When Joseph heard the command of leaving his native country, and flying off with the Child and His mother, he arose at once, went to awake Mary, who was sleeping near her Son, and told her the orders of the Angel. The young mother, comprehending the necessity of this hasty and stealthy departure, immediately arose, took up the sleeping babe, wrapped Him up in His clothes; and bearing Him in her arms, left her native town, seated on an ass, which St. Joseph procured for the long and tedious journey. The night on which they set out was cold, and many a mile had they to go, and many a day and night had they to travel before they could reach their destination; and whether they were to return or not was uncertain. Oh, what a spectacle! The Master of the universe, the King of kings, flying to save His life when only a few days born! What must He have suffered during so long and so painful a journey! Flying through a strange country, from the fury of a tyrant, without aid or protection, except that afforded by His mother and St. Joseph! From the example of Jesus, persecuted in His tender years, let us learn to submit with resignation to the decrees of Providence, which rules everything with infinite goodness and wisdom. In

the meantime, Herod, fired with jealousy and disappointment, began to rage with fury. As he had ordered, all the poor innocent children born within the last two years in and about Bethlehem were massacred. An infant made him tremble upon his throne ; and to make sure of His destruction, he drenched the country with blood, and made the air resound with the shrieks and lamentations of afflicted mothers. Yet, though numerous children were butchered, He whose life alone was aimed at escaped the barbarous sentence.

9. The Holy Family, it is thought, lived seven years in Egypt. At the end of that time, Herod having died, an Angel of the Lord appeared again to Joseph in his sleep, and ordered him to return into the land of Israel : " Arise ", said he, " take the young Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead that sought the life of the Child " (*Matthew*, ii. 20). Then Joseph arose, and taking Jesus and Mary, began his journey back to his native country. Though Herod was dead, his son Archelaus, his successor, might, too, seek the life of Jesus ; and fearing this, St. Joseph, warned by God, avoided the territory of Judea, and went to Nazareth, Mary's birthplace, and there took up his residence.

Nazareth being the residence of Jesus, He was called a Nazarean, thus fulfilling the prophecy: " He shall be called a Nazarean".

Q. What more does the Gospel tell us about the earliest years of Jesus Christ ?

A. That He lived at Nazareth, subject to His mother and St. Joseph, and grew up in holiness and wisdom.

10. The Gospel makes no mention of what Jesus did from the time of His infancy until He was twelve years of age, except that " He grew and waxed strong, full of wisdom, and the grace of God was in Him" ;

and that "He was subject to Joseph and Mary His mother". Here we have in a few words the perfect model of the life and virtues of every Christian child. He was subject to His parents, dear children, that you might learn from His example to respect and be submissive to your parents—to do at once, and without murmuring, what they require of you. Will you, children, refuse complying with your parents' commands, and tell them that you will only do what you please, when you see Jesus, the Lord of all things, obedient and submissive to Joseph, and Mary His mother? He was obedient to them during His life, and shall you, scarcely twelve years old, tell your parents that you will not obey them? As Jesus grew up in wisdom and holiness, so, too, should you advance in virtue and piety as you advance in years, that you may obtain the grace of God and all the blessings of Heaven. From this day forward let it be your earnest desire to become every day more obedient, more recollected, more virtuous, more charitable, and pious.*

Q. What did Jesus Christ do when He was twelve years old?

A. Jesus Christ, at twelve years of age, having gone up to the Temple of Jerusalem with His mother and St. Joseph, remained there three days disputing with the doctors.

11. There was a solemn feast called the Pasch, prescribed by the law of Moses to the Jews, and to observe this feast, every year they used to go up to Jerusalem. Joseph and Mary attended regularly at this festival, and performed in the Temple what the law required of them. When Jesus was twelve years old He accompanied them. To attend at this Paschal feast, the Jews, in going from the country to Jerusalem, were in the habit of travelling in large companies or parties. A great many from the same place

would join together and make a large travelling party, so as to be more safe from the attacks of robbers. The Holy Family travelled to Jerusalem and back in one of these companies. The eighth and last day of the festival being over, Joseph and Mary set out on their return to Nazareth, and the Child Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem without their knowing it. Thinking that He was in some one of the companies, they went a day's journey before they felt any uneasiness about Him. Then they sought for Him among their relations and acquaintances, who were returning with them, but the Child was not to be found anywhere. The afflicted parents, not finding Him, went back to Jerusalem to look for Him there.

12. For three days, with great anxiety and grief, they searched through all the city, and still could not find Him ; but at the end of the third day they went into the Temple, and behold ! they found Jesus sitting among the doctors of the Jewish law, asking them questions, listening to what they had to say, as if He wished to be better instructed. Jesus being then full of knowledge and wisdom, required no information from the Jewish doctors. He could have taught all these doctors, but His humility was such that He wished to appear only as a little child requiring instruction. The doctors and all who heard Him were astonished at His wisdom. They never heard such answers given before as were given on that occasion by a child twelve years old ; and they wondered exceedingly at His profound knowledge. The moment that Mary saw her Son she forgot her grief ; the sight of Him filled her soul with joy, and she said : " Son, why hast Thou done so to us ? Behold, Thy father and I have sought Thee sorrowing ". But Jesus answered them, saying : " How is it that you were seeking Me ? Did you not know that I

must be about My Father's business?" By this answer Jesus Christ wished to teach us that when there is question of God's work, no motive nor consideration should ever prevent us from performing it. The glory of God is far above everything else; a lesson to all parents never to divert their children from the service of God, if He calls them to His holy work.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE BLESSED VIRGIN'S HOUSE AT NAZARETH.

* According to the unanimous accounts of travellers, the most holy house of the Virgin was situated on the declivity of the hill on which the town of Nazareth was built. The dilapidated dwelling, after having escaped the sacking of Nazareth under Vespasian, in the year 74 of our Lord, remained concealed amongst the ruins of the town until the Empress Helen had the good fortune of discovering it. In the year 1221, the whole of Palestine fell under the power of the infidels; twenty-five thousand Christians were put to the sword, and two hundred thousand were brought into slavery. The Holy Places were exposed to profanation of every kind. The Church of Nazareth, built by the pious Helen, was subverted. The most holy house of the Virgin alone escaped the general ruin. On the tenth of May, under the pontificate of Nicholas IV., a house was seen resting on an elevated spot in Dalmatia, where it was well known a house had never been seen before. The house was small, and its plan was rather novel. Its sudden appearance excited no little surprise. The inhabitants of the town of Tersatz ran to the spot in crowds, and their astonishment was increased when the curate of the locality, seriously ill up to that time, appeared among his flock, and announced to them that he had just been miraculously cured, and that his unexpected recovery was only a confirmation of what had been lately revealed to him, that the little house which excited their wonder was the very house which the Blessed Virgin occupied in Nazareth. At the end of three years and seven months, the holy house disappeared, and the inhabitants of

the Marches of Ancona were filled with astonishment at seeing one day a strange house near the town of Recanati, in the territory of Loretto. The holy house was invisibly transported from Dalmatia, over the Adriatic Sea, to the coast of Italy. The second translation had taken place on the 10th of December, 1294, under the pontificate of Boniface VIII. In a short time the holy house attracted the attention first of the county round, then of Italy at large, and at length of the whole Christian world. The miracle was everywhere heard with joy and admiration, and everywhere welcomed with implicit unsuspecting faith. Princes and prelates, rich and poor, hastened with pious alacrity to venerate the terrestrial abode of the Incarnate Word, and to implore the aid and protection of His Virgin Mother. Gifts and votive offerings accumulated; a magnificent church was erected; gold, silver, and diamonds blazed round every altar, and heaps of treasures loaded the shelves of the Sacristy; various edifices rose around the new temple, and Loretto became, as it still remains, a large and populous city.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Who were the Magi that came to adore Jesus Christ?
2. What were the instructions of Herod to the Magi?
3. What offerings did the Magi present to the Infant God?
4. At what time did the Magi arrive at Bethlehem?
5. What do you mean by the Presentation of Christ?
6. What were the words of Simeon when taking Jesus into his arms?
7. What means were adopted by Herod to take away the life of Jesus?
8. How did Jesus escape the general massacre?
9. Where did the Holy Family live after their return from Egypt?
10. What should children learn from the example of the Child Jesus?
11. Did Jesus return with His parents from Jerusalem?
12. Where was He found, and how was He engaged?

PRACTICE.

1. Have a tender devotion to the Infant Jesus, and invoke the holy name with respect when arising in the morning and retiring to bed at night.

2. Take the Child Jesus as your model, and learn from His example to be always obedient to your parents and superiors.

PRAYER.

O my God! Thou art all love. I return Thee thanks for having given me, in the person of Thy Divine Son, so bright an example of every virtue, and particularly of the virtues suited to my age—docility, humility, and submission to parents. Henceforward, in imitation of the Child Jesus, I will respect my parents, and always obey their commands. Amen.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON THE BAPTISM, TEMPTATION, AND PREACHING OF JESUS.

Q. How long did Christ live on earth?

A. About thirty-three years He led a most holy life in poverty and sufferings.

1. It would, indeed, be very interesting and edifying to know everything about our dear Redeemer; how He lived, how He was employed, what He said during the eighteen years that intervened between His being found in the Temple and the commencement of His public life. But with regard to that part of His life our pious curiosity cannot be satisfied; for, the Scriptures are altogether silent as to what occurred to the Holy Family during that period. However, a great many holy persons tell us that, during these many years of His childhood and manhood, He helped St. Joseph by working at his trade, who, as we said before, was a carpenter. One who has written the life of the Blessed Virgin tells us that

Jesus used to take an axe and follow His reputed father to the villages where work was procured for them; and that at home He gave His mother as much assistance as His age and strength would allow.* Jesus, with Mary and Joseph, led a life of ceaseless toil; and He who might command legions of Angels asked nothing from God for Himself and His parents but "their daily bread".

2. Can there be a more consoling thought to all those Christians who, from their state, are obliged to spend their days in poverty, toil, and obscurity, than the reflection that Jesus Christ spent the greatest part of His life in retirement and obscurity, altogether unknown by those whom He came upon earth to save? Perhaps, dear children, there is no period of our dear Lord's life that conveys more instruction than that called His hidden life, during which He performed nothing extraordinary; during which those divine hands, which upheld the heavens and the earth, were employed at the coarse work of a carpenter's shop, during which He ate His bread by the sweat of His brow. Then, equally as in after time, He set us those great examples of humility, silence, poverty, industry, and retirement. Assuredly you cannot be placed in a state more conducive to your salvation than in that which Jesus Christ has preferred to all other states. Live, then, in retirement; pray, be submissive and humble, and you shall gain heaven. Ah! how many mistakes, how many falls, how many crimes, perhaps, you would have avoided, had you always taken these wise precautions.

Q. When did Jesus Christ commence His public life?

A. When He was thirty years old; at that time He demanded baptism from St. John the Baptist, and soon after retired into the desert.

* See Orsini's "Life of the Blessed Virgin", translated by the Rev. Patrick Power.

3. When Jesus Christ was in His thirtieth year, and still living privately in the house of Nazareth, St. John had been preaching aloud to the people—“Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make straight His paths”. John was the son of Zachary and of Elizabeth—who was cousin of the Blessed Virgin—and was born a short time before our Lord. When he grew up he began to preach to the Jews to prepare for the coming of our Saviour, which had been foretold by the prophets and by his father Zachary. He was called the Precursor, because he announced the coming of the Messiah, and called on the Jews to prepare themselves for His arrival.

4. When very young John retired into the wilderness, and led a very holy and penitential life there, living on locusts and wild honey, and wearing a garment of camel's hair and a leathern girdle round his waist. After having lived for some time in the wilderness, more like an angel than a man, he went forth from it, and passed through the country, preaching to the Jews to prepare themselves by a sincere repentance for the pure and holy laws of Jesus Christ. When, as was said before, Jesus Christ was in His thirtieth year, John appeared on the banks of the river Jordan, saying, “Do penance! for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”. The people flocked from Jerusalem and the other towns around it to hear his exhortations to penance; and as a sign of their repentance, he washed them in the waters of the Jordan. This baptism was different from the one that Jesus Christ afterwards instituted.

5. To give the Jews an example of what they should do, and to teach us to be humble, Jesus Himself came from Galilee, and presented Himself before John to be baptized as though He had been a sinner like the other Jews. The Baptist was filled with amazement at the humility of Jesus Christ, and at

first refused to baptize Him, saying : " I ought to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me ? " And Jesus answering, said unto him : " Suffer it to be so now, for so it becometh us to fulfil all justice. Then John suffered Him ". And Jesus went down to the water, and was baptized.

6. When Jesus Christ had been baptized, and had come out of the water, He began to pray. Scarcely had He commenced praying than Heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in the form of a dove upon Him, and at the same time a voice from Heaven was heard saying : " Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well pleased ". A dove is the symbol of innocence and mildness, of purity and of tender love — virtues which the Holy Ghost communicates to our souls. Often, dear children, pray to the Holy Spirit to descend on you with these heavenly gifts ; they are necessary for you at all times, but particularly when you are about receiving your first communion. The baptism of Jesus Christ was the beginning of His public life or ministry, during which He was to suffer so much for us, and which was to be closed by a most painful and disgraceful death.*

Q. Where did Jesus Christ retire after being baptized by St. John ?

A. Jesus Christ, after His baptism, retired into the wilderness, and there fasted forty days and forty nights, and was afterwards tempted by the devil.

7. After Jesus Christ had been baptized by John in the Jordan, He was full of the Holy Ghost ; and this Holy Spirit led Him into the desert, where, during forty days and forty nights, He fasted and prayed. The desert into which Jesus Christ retired was a very wild and dreary place, with a surface of dry scorching sand. In this desolate spot He had no companions but the wild beasts, living in the caves

of the rocks. After incessant prayer and a rigorous fast—so rigorous that during the forty days He took no food—He allowed Himself to be tempted by the devil. That wicked spirit, who is always watching how he may destroy holy souls, came to Jesus, and knowing that He must be hungry after so long a fast, began to tempt Him, saying : “ If Thou art the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread”. But our Lord, knowing the malice of the wicked tempter, answered him, saying : “ It is written, not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God”.

8. The devil, seeing that there was no likelihood of attaining his object in a dreary wilderness, as there was no tempting object around, took our blessed Saviour, by permission from God, conveyed Him to Jerusalem, “ and set Him upon the pinnacle of the Temple”. Then the devil said to Him : “ If Thou be the Son of God, cast Thyself down, for it is written, that He hath given His angels charge of Thee, and in their hands shall they bear Thee up, lest perhaps Thou dash Thy foot against a stone”. These words were quoted by the devil from the Psalms of David, with the intention of tempting Jesus to pride. They had reference to Christ, and the devil repeated them, to show that He need not fear casting Himself from the Temple ; as, if He were the Holy One, Angels should bear Him up. But Jesus would not be tempted by Satan to do what he asked ; so He said to him : “ It is written again, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God”.

9. Satan, though twice baffled, would not desist, but still persevered, and made another attempt. He took Jesus up into a very high mountain, from which he showed Him all the kingdoms of the earth, with the glory and riches of them : “ All these will I give Thee”, said he, “ if Thou wilt fall down and adore

me". How the devil could show at once to our Lord all the kingdoms of the world, with all the palaces, and courts, and splendours, and riches of these kingdoms, we cannot tell ; but the gospel tells us that all this magnificence and all these splendours were spread out by the devil at our Lor 's feet to tempt Him. But our Lord would not be tempted, but turning to Satan, said to him : " Begone, Satan ; for it is written, 'the Lord thy God shalt thou adore, and Him only shalt thou serve' ". Being 'hus, for the third time, repulsed, Satan, as the S riptures tell us, " left Him, and Angels came and ministered unto Him" (*Mat.*, iv.).

10. Jesus, dear children, allowed Himself to be tempted by the devil, in order to teach us that even the greatest saints are not exempt from ter ptations, and that, if we wish to continue faithful to God, we must be always prepared against the attacks of Satan. Jesus Christ, by fasting and praying in t e desert, points out to us the means which we shoul adopt to overcome the assaults of the tempter. The arms that we should take up to vanquish our enemies hould be the same as those by which Jesus Christ conquered. These arms are retirement, prayer, watching, and fasting. As Jesus Christ retired into the desert, so we should retire from the world ; that is, withdraw our affections from its vanities and pleasures. As Jesus Christ prayed and fasted, so should we fast and pray, by strictly observing the fasts of the Church, by mortifying our senses, by not looking on dangerous objects, by praying fervently to God, morning and night, often repeating that part of the Lord's Prayer, " lead us not into temptation". If you act in this manner, you will overcome all the temptations of Satan, however violent they be ; you will repel all the assaults of the devil, and you will have the consolation of being visited by the Angels

of Heaven, who will congratulate you on the victory you have won. Oh! what joy, what pleasure, does not a soul experience when it has put to flight the tempting spirit! The joy felt is a foretaste of the happiness of the saints in Heaven, and a recompense which God grants in this life to those who are faithful in His love and service.

Q. What did Christ do when He left the desert?

A. When Jesus Christ left the desert, He chose twelve disciples, called Apostles, and with them commenced preaching the Gospel.

11. When Jesus Christ went forth from the desert, He commenced preaching, saying : "Do penance, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand". A great number of persons immediately followed Him, for they were desirous to hear His words, and to see the great and wonderful things He was performing. Those who followed Him were called His "disciples". Out of those He chose twelve, to attach them particularly to Himself, and called them "Apostles"—a word which means *sent*—because He intended to send them to preach the Gospel through all Judea, and then throughout the whole world, to preach and baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The chief of these Apostles was called Simon Peter; the others were Andrew, John the Evangelist, Philip, James, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, Simon, Jude, James, son of Alpheus, and Judas Iscariot. When Judas Iscariot betrayed our Lord, Matthias was chosen to fill his place. Jesus Christ, accompanied by His twelve Apostles, who were simple and unlearned persons, went through all the towns and villages in Judea, preaching to the poor, instructing the ignorant, consoling the afflicted, and converting sinners.

12. It was in Galilee that Jesus Christ began to

announce to the Jews the joyful tidings of the kingdom of Heaven being at hand ; but He did not confine Himself to that part of the Holy Land. He went from place to place, from one town to another, and wherever He appeared, He was surrounded by thousands listening attentively to His words, and amazed at the extraordinary works He performed ; and so enraptured were they at His discourses, and filled with wonder at His miracles, that they almost forgot the support of their bodies. On one particular occasion, no less than five thousand followed Him into a desert, so taken were they with His words. To give a detailed account of all that Jesus Christ said and did during what is called His public life, would, dear children, take a very long time. It should be enough for you to know, that during the last three years and more of His life, He went about doing good to all, pardoning the sinner, comforting the afflicted, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, whilst He Himself had to contend with "poverty" and "sufferings". His long life was spent among the poor. He had no rich friends in this world. He was deprived of earthly comforts and pleasures ; for He Himself tells us, that, though the foxes had some place of security and rest, and the birds a place to retire to at night, yet that He had not even a stone to lay His head upon. He indeed "led a most holy life, in poverty and sufferings". The great miracles wrought by Him, and the doctrines inculcated by Him, we shall consider in the next chapter.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE HIDDEN LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

* "Jesus, as the Master and Source of every science, needed

not the teachings of man ; but, as He was pleased to conceal His dazzling lights under an earthly covering, and to appear in everything like other men, He disdained not the lessons of His pious mother in His early years. Indeed, it is generally believed that Jesus Christ received the rudiments of education from Mary ; and theologians there are that say, that He received no further instruction than that instilled into His youthful mind by His mother. The Jews, holding a different opinion, maintain, on the contrary, that a celebrated Rabbin, then teaching at Nazareth, perfected what Mary had begun. But despite this assertion of the Jews, the education of Jesus was not the work of the rabbins ; for it is well known that He was neither a zealot nor a traditionist, and that He reprobated that narrow-minded, interested, and cavilling spirit which pervaded the synagogue. Moreover, St. John decides the question, in saying in his Gospel, that the Jews looked on Jesus as an unlettered man. He whose mission it was to alter the opinions and creeds of the world, could learn nothing from man ; and so His learning must be His own work. Christ, like the cedars, towers aloft of His own innate force, indebted to no mortal for His eloquence and learning. . . . To see Jesus simply but neatly attired as an Essen, His long auburn hair parted evenly on His polished brow, and floating in graceful ringlets over His shoulders, one would have taken Him for David, at the moment when Samuel beheld him approaching, diminutive, timid, attired as a simple shepherd, to receive the holy unction. The hazel, soft eye of Christ was, however, lighted up with a greater fire of expression than the poetical and prophetic eye of His illustrious predecessor. Something indescribably divine and penetrating beamed from it, which laid open the very thoughts, and entered the inmost depths of the soul".—*Orsini's Life of the Blessed Virgin.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. How was Jesus engaged during His early years ?
2. Is the early life of Jesus a source of comfort to the poor ?
3. Mention the circumstances of the life of the Baptist.
4. Where did John preach penance to the Jews ?
5. Why did Jesus Christ present Himself for Baptism ?
6. What happened when Jesus came out of the Jordan ?

7. In what manner was Christ tempted by Satan ?
8. How again did the devil tempt Christ ?
9. What tempting offer was made by Satan the third time ?
10. Why did Jesus allow Himself to be tempted ?
11. Name the twelve Apostles chosen by Jesus.
12. How was Jesus received when He began to preach ?

PRACTICE.

1. If, from our state of life, we are prevented from enjoying the pleasures and amusements of the world, let us console ourselves with the thought that Jesus our Lord spent a poor ~~retiro~~ life.

2. To resist the attacks of the devil, let us, in imitation of Jesus, practise mortification, and pray continually for grace and help.

3. Never forget that by overcoming the temptations of Satan, we shall reign eternally with Jesus Christ ; but if we shall yield to his temptations, we shall for ever burn in hell with the devils.

PRAYER.

Grant, dear Lord ! that I may never forfeit my right to heaven, in yielding to the temptations of hell. Inspire me with sentiments of humility, that I may continually distrust myself, and place all my reliance upon Thy grace ; conduct me in Thy holy ways, and make me triumph over all the temptations with which the devil may assail me. Holy Mother of Jesus, obtain for me a contrite and humble heart, the best safeguard against the assaults of Satan. Amen.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE INSTRUCTIONS, EXAMPLE, AND MIRACLES OF
CHRIST.

Q. Why did Christ live so long as thirty-three years on earth ?

A. To show us the way to Heaven by His instructions and example.

1. In every stage of His life, Jesus Christ has pointed out to us "the way to Heaven" by His example equally as "by His instructions". The salvation of our souls was what He had in view in becoming man; and during a long and eventful life, all His thoughts, all His words, all His wonderful acts were directed to that end.

All "His instructions" point out the way to Heaven. In His celebrated sermon on the mount, preached by Him in the beginning of His public ministry, He pointed out "the way to Heaven", by telling His hearers things that appeared very strange to them, and the like of which they had never before heard. He told them that the "poor in spirit" were blessed, and he declared the same to those who were meek and just. To those who "mourn and are afflicted" He promised comfort in Heaven, if they here bore their griefs with patience and submission to the will of God. He strongly inculcated the necessity of practising humility—a virtue up to that time scarcely known—by telling those around Him that unless their justice "abounded more than that of the Scribes and Pharisees", they could not enter the kingdom of Heaven. They might make an open profession of religion; they might strictly observe the Jewish law; they might fast and say long prayers; but our Lord tells them that all that will not save them, unless their goodness be greater and more real than the goodness of the Pharisees.

2. In this sermon on the mount, He warns all Christians against the sin of scandal. "If thy right eye", He says, "scandalize thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish, rather than thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand scandalize thee, cut it off and cast it from thee; for it is better for thee that one of thy members should

perish, rather than that thy whole body should go into hell". The meaning of which words is, that though a thing were as dear to us, and as precious as our eyes and hands, we must renounce it, when it becomes an occasion of sin ; the word "scandalize", importing a stumbling-block or an occasion of sin. " You have heard", He says again, " that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thy enemy ; but I say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you. For if you love them that love you, what reward shall you have ? Do not even the Publicans this ? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more ? Do not also the heathens this ?" The heathens who never heard of God, nor of Jesus His Son, love those who love them, and were kind to those who were kind to them ; but Christ tells His followers that they must do more to gain Heaven ; that the goodness of heathens will not be enough for them ; that they must go further, and love not only their friends, but their enemies (*Matt.*, v.).

3. Our Lord went on and told all Christians, too, that all our good acts are not to be made known to the world, but that they are to be done for God alone ; for only on that condition will God reward them. If the praise of men be sought for in all we do, that praise will be our only reward, and we will have no reward in Heaven. Another instruction given us by our Blessed Lord, in order that we might gain Heaven, is the avoiding of rash judgments : " Judge not, that you may not be judged ; and with what measure you mete, it shall be measured to you again". We, who are all weakness and sin, must not pass judgment on our neighbours, lest God should pass judgment on us. We must not take pleasure in finding out and speaking of each other's faults,

lest, on the last day, God should lay bare our faults, and demand from us a severe account of them.

4. God has not only taught us the way to Heaven, but He has pointed it out "by His example". He has given Himself to us as a model in every stage of His life, that we may see the way in which we should walk, so as to arrive at eternal happiness. In His childhood, He has set the example of gentleness, humility, and obedience. In after life, He was a model of every virtue. In Him shone brightly forth justice, mercy, love, goodness, humility, patience, tenderness. What compassion for all those who were in distress ! When the poor woman of Naim was deprived by death of her only son, and grieved and mourned for the loss of her fine boy, Jesus Christ takes compassion on her, and dries up her tears by restoring her son to life. When Mary and Martha were deprived of their brother Lazarus, and deplored his loss, Jesus comforts them, and commands Lazarus to come forth from his grave. What tenderness towards those who were weary and hungry ! When a great multitude followed Jesus into the desert, and had nothing to eat, He made them sit down on the grass, and so multiplied a few loaves and fishes, that five thousand people ate as much as they wanted.

5. What mercy towards poor sinners ! He forgave the woman taken in adultery ; for when she was about to be stoned to death for her sin, He told her "to go and sin no more". Mary Magdalen, the sinner, readily received pardon from Him ; and His kindness and tenderness made her change her whole life, and weep and wail over her many sins and ill-spent years. The thief on the cross heard from our Lord's dying lips that his sins were forgiven, and that he would be with Him in Paradise. What love for His enemies ! They pursue Him with hatred and jealousy ; they calumniate and degrade Him ; they treat

Him with ingratitude and every mark of disrespect ; yet when He speaks, it is only to grant them pardon for the indignities they offer Him. When Judas betrayed Him and basely sold Him, He embraced him, and sweetly called him friend. I could scarcely ever come to a close, if, dear children, I were to enumerate all the virtues which our dear Lord, during His whole life, practised and held out to us for our imitation.

Q. Did Jesus perform miracles during the three years of His public life ?

A. Yes ; to prove that He was the Messiah, He performed many miracles.

6. Our Lord worked a great many miracles in proof of His being the promised Messiah, and to enforce the doctrines which He taught. Miracles are, as it were, credentials signed by the hand of God Himself. The performance of miracles is an undoubted guarantee of the truth of the assertions of he who performs them ; for God could not allow the performance of the slightest miracle in support of deception or lying. A miracle is an effect produced contrary to all the laws of nature, and which must be performed by some supernatural agency. It is quite evident that God can perform miracles, as He is all-powerful ; and as it is He who has established the order of nature, He can change and suspend that order. A miracle could not be worked except through the intervention of God, the author and preserver of nature. God alone can derogate from the laws which He has established for the government of the world ; so that when a miracle occurs, God acts and makes known His power. When a man declares himself to be an ambassador from God, and at the same time, in support of the truth of his assertion, cures blindness and other diseases by a touch or word, and

raises the dead, and stills the raging sea, and feeds a multitude with a few loaves, we must certainly believe his assertion. His declaration is confirmed by the power of God ; and not to give credit to an assertion so confirmed, is to resist the voice of God, which speaks through the miracles.

7. Miracles were, then, the strongest and most striking proofs that Jesus Christ could furnish, in order to establish the divinity of His mission. Thus, when the disciples of St. John the Baptist came and asked Jesus if He were the Messiah, He performed a great many miracles in their presence, saying to them: " Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are made clean, the deaf hear, the dead rise again". The miracles by which Jesus Christ proved that He was sent by God are clear, palpable, many in number, and of various kinds; for heaven and earth obey His voice. Whilst on earth, He restored sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and speech to those who were dumb. On one occasion a dumb man, possessed by the devil, is presented to Him, and by a mere act of His will, He chases the devil away, and the dumb man at once speaks. At another time a demoniac, both blind and dumb, recovers at once, through the power of Christ, his speech and his sight. The people, amazed at the miracle, cried out: " Is not this the Son of David?" Not a disease is there that He does not cure, not an evil that He does not remedy! The lepers are made clean, the lame walk, the dead arise at His touch. " Young man, arise", He says to the widow's son, and the young man is restored to life. " Lazarus, come forth", He cried out, and Lazarus, some days dead, rises from the tomb. These illustrious miracles He performed, sometimes by an application of His spittle, as in the case of the man

deaf and dumb ; sometimes by the touch, as in the case of the mother-in-law of St. Peter ; at other times by His word alone, and at a distance from the place where the miracle was performed, as was the case with regard to the centurion's servant.

8. That all these miracles were really performed by Jesus Christ, no man of sense will deny, for they were public ; they were wrought in the presence of a great many witnesses ; they had been published and noised abroad, and reiterated by the Apostles some years after, before those very persons who had been witnesses of them. The Evangelists often particularized the persons, the time, the place, the manner, and the circumstances connected with them ; and if what they announced had not the stamp of truth, they would have been immediately contradicted by thousands, and would have been held up to scorn as impostors. But *we* were there, would be the answer to them, and we have neither seen nor heard any of these extraordinary things which you are now relating.

9. We read in the Gospel of St. John, that the Jewish rulers narrowly examined into the reality of a miracle performed by Jesus, on a man that was born blind. Jesus passing by, saw a man who was blind from his birth. The disciples asked Him whether it was to the man's sin, or to his parents' sin, his blindness was to be attributed. Neither to the one nor the other, answered our Lord, but that the glory of God may be manifested in his cure. Having said this, He spat upon the ground, and moistened the dust with His spittle into clay, and then spreading it on the eyes of the blind man, desired him to go and wash in the pool of Siloe. The man went and washed, and returned seeing. All those who had known the man and had seen him begging, were amazed, and said : " Is not

this he who sat and begged?" Some said, "This is he". But others said, "No, but he is like him". But he said, "I am he". They said, therefore, to him, "How were thy eyes opened?" He answered, "That man, that is called Jesus, made clay and anointed my eyes, and said to me, Go to the pool of Siloe, and wash. And I went and I washed, and I see". And they said to him, "Where is He?" He saith : "I know not." The man was then brought before the Pharisees, and to their questions he returned the same answers as he did a short time before to his neighbours. The Pharisees were unwilling to believe the fact. There was a division among them. Some said that no good man would transgress the Sabbath by making clay on that day ; whilst others said, that none but a good man could give sight to the blind. They asked the man again what he thought of the person that opened his eyes ; and he answered that He was a prophet (*John, ix.*).

10. The Jews were not pleased at this answer, and pretended not to believe that the man had been blind. They sent for his parents, and asked them whether this was their son, who, it was said, was born blind. And the parents answered : "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind, but how he now seeth we know not ; or who hath opened his eyes we know not ; ask himself, he is of age, let him speak for himself". They, therefore, called the man again, and that they should receive an answer favourable to their wishes, said to him : "Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner". But the man said to them : "If He be a sinner, I know not ; one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see". "Why, what did He do to thee", said they, "and how did He open thy eyes?" "I have already told you", said the man, "and you have heard it. Why do you want to hear it again? Will you also be-

come His disciples?" They, therefore, reviled him, and said, "Be thou His disciple, but we are the disciples of Moses. We know that God spoke to Moses, but as to this man, we know not from whence He is". And the man born blind answered them : "Why herein is a wonderful thing, that you know not from whence He is, and He hath opened my eyes. Now, we know that God doth not hear sinners. From the beginning of the world it hath not been heard, that any man hath opened the eyes of one born blind. Unless this man was of God, He could not do anything". No sooner had the man delivered these sentiments, than the Pharisees became annoyed, then reproached him, and cast him out of the synagogue, for daring to "teach them".*

11. To make any remarks regarding this illustrious miracle performed by Jesus Christ, is indeed unnecessary, for its simple clear recital carries conviction of its truth to any one reading it. Thus has Jesus Christ, in proof of the divinity of His mission, performed many wonderful things, which from their variety, the circumstances connected with them, and the manner in which they were wrought, are clearly opposed to the fixed laws of nature. In denying that Jesus Christ was the long-promised Messiah, we are reduced to this dilemma : we must admit that God employed His power for the purpose of leading man into error, or that He allowed an agent intermediate between Himself and man to practise deception, without affording man any means of detecting the imposition. But this supposition is a ridiculous absurdity. The divine mission of Jesus Christ is, therefore, fully proved from the performance of miracles by Him.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE ATTEMPT TO REBUILD THE TEMPLE OF JERUSALEM.

* Jesus Christ has proved Himself to be the Messiah, not only by fulfilling in His person the prophecies regarding Him, but also by the accomplishment of all the predictions which He uttered whilst He was living in this world. A most striking instance is this: Jesus Christ foretold that the Temple of Jerusalem would be so totally subverted, that not even one stone would be left on another. Julian, the apostate, in order to fix on Jesus Christ the brand of imposture, and thus to bring the Christian religion into disrepute, formed the project of rebuilding the Jewish Temple, which, if he could have compassed, it would have sufficiently answered his wicked design. He accordingly commanded the Jews to repair to Jerusalem, to rebuild their ancient Temple, and re-establish their ancient worship. The news that the Temple was to be rebuilt was no sooner spread abroad, than contributions came from all hands. The Jewish women stript themselves of the most costly ornaments to contribute towards the expense of the building; they even helped to dig the ground and carry out the rubbish in their aprons and skirts of their gowns. It is, too, told that the Jews directed some pick-axes, spades, and baskets to be made of silver for the honour of the work. The power of Julian, the exertions of the chief overseer, Alypius, the rage and insolence of the Jews and pagans, plunged the disciples of our Lord into the most profound grief. But the good bishop, St. Cyril, lately returned from exile, consoled them by telling them that the power of God would prostrate Julian's wicked design, that the desolation of the Temple should last to the end, and that the Jews would not be able to put one stone upon another. The old foundations and some ruins of the walls of the Temple were first removed. Then they began to dig the new foundation, on which work many thousands were employed. But what they had thrown up in the day, was, by repeated earthquakes, cast back again the night following into the trench. "And when Alypius the next day", says Ammianus Marcellinus, "earnestly pressed on the work, with the assistance of the governor of the province, there issued such horrible balls of fire out of the earth near the foundations, as rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen. And the victorious element continuing in this manner

obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, Alypius thought proper to give over the enterprise". Besides the earthquakes and fiery eruptions, Christian writers make mention of storms, tempests, whirlwinds, lightning, crosses impressed on the bodies and garments of the assistants, and a flaming cross in the heavens, surrounded with a luminous circle. The infidels attempted to wash out the shining crosses that were impressed on the bodies and garments of those assisting at the rebuilding of the Temple, and in which there was something that in art and elegance excelled all painting and embroidery; but their brilliancy was increased by the fiery eruption, which was frequently renewed till it overcame the rashness of the most obdurate, for it continued to be repeated as often as the projectors ventured to renew their attempt. Socrates tells us, that at sight of the miracles the Jews at first cried out that Christ is God; yet returned home as hardened as ever. St. Gregory Nazianzen says, that many Gentiles were converted by them, and went over to the Church.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What was the end of Christ's instruction ?
2. What instructions were contained in His Sermon on the Mount ?
3. What has our Lord said of rash judgments ?
4. Was the life of Jesus Christ a lesson pointing out the way to heaven ?
5. Did Jesus Christ show love to sinners and children ?
6. Can miracles be performed by any power but that of God ?
7. Mention some of the miracles performed by Christ.
8. Can there be any doubt of the reality of these miracles?
9. Relate the circumstances connected with the cure of the blind man.
10. What was the answer of the man born blind to the Pharisees ?
11. If Jesus Christ was not the Messiah, what are we to conclude ?

PRACTICE.

- 1 The lessons taught us by Jesus Christ, during His stay

on earth, we should always have before our eyes, that we may continually put them in practice.

2. In all we do and say, Jesus should be our model ; when about to engage in any matter, we should ask ourselves how would Jesus have acted under similar circumstances.

PRAYER.

O good Jesus ! how can I sufficiently thank Thee for leaving Thy bright throne in heaven, and spending a poor miserable life in this world, that Thou mightest redeem me from hell, and point out the way to heaven ? How could I ever have been so wicked as to offend Thee by my sins, after Thy great sufferings for the love of me ? I now return to Thee, and sincerely promise to walk for the future in Thy footsteps, practising humility, patience, and mortification, that I may at last arrive at that glorious kingdom which Thou hast promised to those who follow Thy example. Amen.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ON THE BETRAYAL, BLOODY SWEAT, AND CONDEMNATION OF JESUS CHRIST.

Q. How did Christ end His life ?

A. On Good Friday He was crucified on Mount Calvary, and died nailed to a cross.—*Apostles' Creed.*

1. Notwithstanding the many miracles which Jesus Christ performed in favour of the Jews ; after all the favours He bestowed on them—healing their sick, giving sight to their blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, and making the lame walk—He met only with ingratitude and unkindness at their hands. The many wonders He wrought, the many instructions He delivered, were all in vain ; they closed their eyes to the light, and refused to acknow-

ledge Him as the Messiah. His preaching and His miracles, so far from conciliating the high priests and doctors of the law, served only to inflame their minds and rouse their jealousy against Him. The high priests and Jewish doctors were proud, and vain of their pretended merits. The mighty things which Christ had done ; the benefits bestowed by Him on all those who flocked to Him ; the respect and admiration which the poor Jews entertained for His person, fired them with jealousy, and stung them to the quick. They saw that their influence over the people was every day becoming less, that their authority was undervalued, and that there was every reason to expect that the people would soon altogether follow Jesus Christ and abandon themselves.

2. Whilst they were planning how Jesus could be made away with, a traitor enters and removes their embarrassment. The traitor was Judas, one of the Apostles of Jesus. He proposed at once to deliver Him up to them. There was not much difficulty in arranging the sum that he was to receive for betraying his Lord and Master. This miserable man, Judas Iscariot, was, it seems, fond of money, for he had care of the purse in which Jesus and His Apostles kept whatever they had collected for the poor. His avarice induced him to steal small sums from this bag. The loss of his faith soon followed his theft. When the proposal of thirty pieces of silver—a sum not exceeding twenty-five shillings of our money—was made to him, he first listened, and then thinking how nice it would be to have that sum, and how much he could do with it, he made up his mind to accept of the terms, and deliver up his God into the hands of those wicked men, who were, he knew, desirous of His blood. When Judas accepted of their proposal they rejoiced ; for now they were going to get their enemy into their hands. The terms of the sale of Jesus

Christ's blood being fixed on, Judas went away, determined, as soon as an opportunity presented itself, to betray our Lord into the hands of His enemies.

3. The opportunity soon offered ; for, on Thursday, in the last week of Jesus Christ's stay on earth, called Holy Thursday, our Lord was sitting with His twelve Apostles at the supper table. And while they were eating, Jesus said : "Amen, I say unto you, one of you that eateth with Me shall betray Me". The Apostles, with the exception of Judas, were filled with sorrow at the words of our Lord, and they began, one by one, to ask, "Is it I ?" Our Lord answered, "It is one of the twelve who dipped his hand with Me in the dish". Judas, fearing that if he remained silent it would be a proof that he was the person to whom our Lord alluded, also said, "Is it I, Rabbi ?" Jesus said to him in a low tone, "Thou hast said it".

4. It was at this supper that our Lord instituted the Blessed Eucharist, by changing bread and wine into His body and blood, which He distributed to His Apostles, not even excepting the traitor, Judas, who dared to receive it, and so was the first to make an unworthy communion. He had no sooner received the sacred body of our Lord, than the devil entered into him ; and he arose at once and went out in the darkness of the night, spiteful and sullen, to perform his dark wicked deed. Shortly after the departure of Judas, Christ and His Apostles, having first sung a hymn, left and proceeded towards the Mount of Olives. Having arrived there, they entered a garden called Gethsemani.

Q. What torment did Jesus Christ suffer in the garden of Gethsemani ?

A. Jesus Christ fell into an agony so deep, that drops of bloody sweat flowed from His body on the ground, and then He was taken by the soldiers, who led Him forth bound as a criminal.

5. Our Lord, taking with Him Peter, James, and John, retired a little to a private part of the garden, saying to the other Apostles and disciples : " Sit ye here, till I go yonder and pray". When Jesus had thus retired, He began to grow sorrowful and sad ; and He said to the three Apostles : " My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death ; stay you here and watch with Me". And going a little further, He fell upon His face, praying and saying : " My Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me : nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt". The anguish of mind which He experienced at this moment was so deep as to cast Him into a bitter agony. Thick drops, as it were of blood, gushed through the pores of His body, and trickled down upon the ground. The terrors of this agony were caused by the dreadful thought of His creatures offending Him by sin, and of many of them being damned, after all He was going to endure for them. Our sins it was, dear children, that made drop after drop of His sweat fall from His sacred body on that fearful night. In the midst of His distress an angel descended from heaven and comforted Him. The struggle and bloody sweat being over, our Lord rose from prayer and came to His disciples, now for the third time, and finding them asleep, awoke them, saying : " The hour is come, behold, the Son of Man shall be betrayed into the hands of sinners. Rise up, let us go. Behold, he that will betray Me is at hand" (*St. Matt., xxvi.*).

6. As He said these words, a band of soldiers appeared, led by the chief priests and Pharisees, and entered the garden with lanterns, clubs, and swords. Judas Iscariot was seen walking at their head. It was a place very well known to the traitor, for he had frequently accompanied his Master thither, when He went to pray. The soldiers did not know Jesus,

and might easily have mistaken another for Him, if the wretched Judas had not agreed beforehand with the band, to give them a sign by which they might know which was Jesus. The signal he agreed upon was a kiss—"Whosoever", said he, "I shall kiss, that is He, hold Him fast". Accordingly, the traitor, when entering the garden, went straight up to Jesus, and, adding deceit and treachery to his already dreadful sin, said: "Hail, Rabbi", or Master, and then kissed Him. "Friend", said our blessed Lord to him, "for what art thou come? Is it thus that thou betrayest the Son of Man with a kiss?" Then the soldiers and servants rushed upon our Redeemer, cruelly bound His arms with thick cords, and thus bound, dragged Him violently over the rugged road towards Jerusalem. His disciples were seized with alarm, and leaving their kind Master in the hands of His bitter enemies, fled away.

Q. Whither was Christ conducted after being made prisoner?

A. To the house Caiphas, where He was spat upon, buffeted, and loaded with a thousand insults.

7. Our blessed Lord being forsaken by His disciples, was dragged along, bound and manacled by His enemies, into the city, and brought before Annas, the father-in-law of Caiphas, the high Priest for that year. He was not detained long at the house of Annas, but being bound there more securely, He was sent to Caiphas. As Jesus entered the house of Caiphas, where the elders and doctors of the law were assembled, He was met by jeers and scoffs. The high Priest began to question Jesus about His disciples and doctrine, and put many other insolent questions to Him. Jesus answered Him: "I have spoke openly to the world. I have always taught in the synagogue, whither all the Jews resort, and in

secret I have spoken nothing. Why askest thou Me? Ask them who have heard what I have spoken unto them; behold they know what things I have said". Upon that one of the servants who were standing by gave Jesus a blow, saying: "Answerest Thou the high Priest so?" Our dear Saviour, after receiving this vile stroke on His sacred face, turned to the wretch, and meekly replied: "If I have spoken evil, give witness of the evil, but if well, why strikest thou Me?" To this remonstrance of our dear Saviour, the high Priest and his council made no answer.

8. But as they were fully resolved to put Him to death, and that some colour of justice might be given to their sentence, an accusation was brought against Him, and false witnesses produced in support of the charge. These witnesses declared that they had heard Him say that He could "destroy the temple of God, and in three days' time build it up again", giving a false interpretation to what He had some time before said of the destruction of His body, and of Its resurrection on the third day. To the accusation Jesus answered not a word. Caiphas rose up and asked Him, if He had no reply to make to the charge brought against Him. Jesus was still silent. Upon this, the high Priest became vexed at our Lord's silence, addressed Him again, saying: "I adjure thee, by the living God, that Thou tell us if Thou be Christ, the Son of God". Jesus, seeing Himself thus conjured in the name of God, answered him at once: "Thou hast said it". Caiphas hearing this, rent his garments, and cried out: "He hath blasphemed. What further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now, you have heard the blasphemy; what think you?" They all exclaimed—He is guilty of death; and immediately they left the court. Then it was that the soldiers and inso-

lent rabble, surrounding Jesus, began to torment and insult Him. They tore off His beard and hair ; they spat upon His face ; they mocked and buffeted Him for their amusement ; they blindfolded His eyes, and striking His face with the palms of their hands, they, in tones of mockery and derision, bade Him guess who it was that struck Him. Enduring insults such as these, from wretches urged on by the devil, Jesus passed the whole night (*Matt.*, xxvi.).

Q. What was the next step taken by the Jews ?

A. They take Jesus Christ before Pilate, the governor of Judea, and then before Herod, who sent Him back to Pilate.

9. As we have mentioned above, dear children, all that long night, our Lord was obliged to submit to the scoffs and insults of the soldiers and servants of the high Priest. And when the morning was come, the Jewish council met again to complete their murderous plan against Jesus. The result of their meeting was to send Him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea, for they well knew that any one charged with disturbing the public peace would be quickly and severely punished by the Romans. Therefore Jesus, bound like a public criminal, was led from Caiphas to Pilate. Pontius Pilate, on seeing our Lord brought before him, turned to His accusers, and asked them what accusation they had brought against the man ? The chief Priests and those with them answered that if He were not a malefactor they would not have brought Him thither. Then Pilate, who, being a Roman, held the Jews and their laws in the greatest contempt, said : "Take Him you, and judge Him according to your law".

10. The Jews replied, that they had no longer the power of sentencing any man to death. They then began to charge Him with crimes against the state. We have found this man, said they, stirring up the

people to sedition ; He forbade the tribute money to be paid to Cæsar, and He called Himself Christ, the Messiah, and laid claim to the title of King of the Jews. Pilate then, hearing the charges brought against Him, went into the hall again, and calling Jesus, asked Him, "Art Thou the king of the Jews?" for he attached the greatest importance to the last charge, as the Romans were very jealous of any one setting himself up to be a king. Jesus, knowing that Pilate put the question in simplicity, replied, "My kingdom is not of this world : if My kingdom were of this world, My servants would certainly strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews".

11. Pilate then went back to the Jews, and told them that he could not find Him guilty of anything. But they grew more earnest, and cried out that He had been stirring up the people through the whole country of Judea, from Galilee to Jerusalem. When Galilee was mentioned, Pilate asked if Jesus were a Galilean, and being told He was, he sent Him to Herod, who was king of Galilee, and who happened to be at Jerusalem at that time. Having already heard of the many wonderful things Jesus had done, Herod was glad of having an opportunity of seeing whether He was the extraordinary person represented to be, and hoped to see some sign or miracle worked in his presence.

12. So when Jesus came before him, he asked Him many questions ; but our Lord, knowing his vain and insolent curiosity, made no reply to his questions. Herod, finding that Jesus would not answer, treated Him as a simpleton, and laughed at Him, and ridiculed Him, and then put on Him an old white garment, in shape like one of those worn by the emperors, and, dressed up in this fantastic style, sent Him back, surrounded by the whole army shouting at and scoffing Him, to Pilate. Pilate, wishing very

much to release Jesus, went out again to the Jews and told them there were no grounds for the charge they had brought against Jesus ; and that Herod thought so too, for he had sent Him back uncondemned. And knowing that the chief Priests delivered Him into his hands out of mere spite and envy, he tried every means to set Him free.

13. In order to succeed, he said to them : " You have a custom that I should release at the paschal time any one prisoner you please : will I then release unto you the king of the Jews ? Will you have Barabbas, or Jesus that is called Christ ? " This Barabbas was a prisoner, convicted of robbery, murder, and sedition, and with him was Jesus set in competition for the people's choice. For a while the people remained in doubt, as it were, whom to choose ; but the whispering lies of the Jewish Priests about our Lord induced them to select the murderer, and at once they all cried out : " Not this man, but Barabbas ". Give us Barabbas ; away with Jesus to be crucified. Pilate was distressed and surprised at the choice they made, and said to them : " What shall I do, then, with Jesus, who is called Christ ? " And they all said : " Let Him be crucified ; crucify Him, crucify Him ! " During this scene Pontius Pilate's wife sent to him saying : " Have thou nothing to do with this just man, for I have suffered many things in a dream this day because of Him ". This message from his wife was a fresh inducement to Pilate not to condemn Jesus to death ; but, though aware that Jesus was innocent, he feared to set Him free. He then resolved on a middle course, and that was, to inflict chastisement on Him, and then let Him go. But this proposal was rejected, and again the cry was raised : " Crucify Him, crucify Him ! " When Pilate saw that his efforts to free Jesus were unavailing, he took some water and washed his hands

before the multitude, saying : " I am innocent of the blood of this just man, look you to it". And the multitude answering, said : " His blood be upon us and upon our children !" Then Pilate, by a barbarous and wicked policy, released Barabbas, and delivered Jesus to be scourged and crucified* (*Matt.*, xxvii.).

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

DOROTHY TAKING JESUS CHRIST AS HER MODEL.

* " Dorothy", said the Curé one day to one of his young parishioners, " will you tell me how you spend your day, and the manner in which you comport yourself towards your companions ? " " Indeed, sir, I do not so much as I should ", replied Dorothy ; " but I once received an advice, when at school, from my mistress, and though very young then, I have not forgotten it. She told me to propose Jesus Christ to myself as a model in all my actions, difficulties, and sorrows, and that advice I endeavour to practise daily.

" When I awake in the morning, and arise from my bed, I offer myself to God, in imitation of Jesus Christ offering Himself to His Father, and consecrate to Him all the actions and labours of the day. When I go to pray, I represent to myself Jesus praying to His Father, and I endeavour to unite my disposition to His. When I go to labour, I think how Jesus laboured and toiled for my sake ; and so far from complaining, I lovingly, and in a spirit of resignation, unite my labours to His. When I am asked to do anything by my parents and superiors, I always call to mind Jesus Christ obeying His Mother and St. Joseph. If any one speaks evil of me, and addresses me in harsh, abusive language, I make no reply, but I suffer all this patiently, recollecting that Jesus Christ suffered in silence, and without the least complaint, false accusations, unjust calumnies, cruel torments, and base insults. And then I say to myself, if the innocent Jesus suffered these, do not I, a sinner, deserve even worse treatment than I receive ? When I eat and drink, I think of the frugality and abstemiousness of Jesus Christ. When I take anything bitter and unpleasant, I call to mind our Lord taking vinegar and gall. During my recreations, and whilst

conversing with my companions, I begin to think of the affability of Christ, and how sweet His conversation with His apostles was. When I am preparing for confession, I represent to myself Jesus Christ bowed down in the Garden of Olives, and bewailing my sins. When I assist at Mass, I call to mind the great sacrifice which Christ offered on the cross, and then I pray for all sinners, that they may be saved through the blood of Christ. When I retire to bed at night, I think of Jesus Christ and His short slumbers, and of His not even having a place to lay His head on. And then I think of the hard cross of Christ, and how different it was from my bed; and when composing myself to sleep, I repeat the words of Christ on the cross—‘My Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit’. This is the way in which I spend the day; and I find that there is nothing that will make us so happy as to do everything for God”.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What were the sentiments of the high priests towards Jesus?
2. What led Judas Iscariot to sell his Master to the Jews?
3. What said our Lord to His apostles at the last supper?
4. What followed when Judas received the body and blood of Jesus?
5. Describe the agony of Jesus in the garden of Gethsemani.
6. In what way was Jesus betrayed by Judas?
7. How was Jesus treated by the high priest Caiphas?
8. What accusation was brought against Him by the witnesses?
9. Relate the interview between Pontius Pilate and the Jews.
10. How was Jesus Christ treated by Herod?
11. To whom did Pilate send Jesus?
12. How was Jesus received by Herod?
13. What resource did Pilate adopt to free Jesus Christ?

PRACTICE.

1. When you are falsely charged and unjustly accused of anything, do not complain; but at once call to mind the false charges brought against Jesus Christ.

2. When you meet with coldness and ingratitude from one to whom you were often kind and generous, do not resent it; but recollect the return of kindness made by Jesus to Judas.

PRAYER.

O my Jesus ! how is it that Thou allowed Thyself to be treated as a fool, to be mocked, and sneered at, and ridiculed? Were all these indignities endured through love for me ? O Lord ! I am now penetrated with grief for my sins ; for I know that my sins were the cause of all the mockeries and insults that Thou receivedst from the Jews. Before now, when deliberately offending Thee for the sake of some wretched indulgence, I often preferred Barabbas to Thee ; but it shall be no more. Henceforward nothing shall prevent me from loving and serving Thee. Mother of God, assist me in keeping this resolution. Amen.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ON THE SCOURGING AND CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS CHRIST.

Q. What were the sufferings of Jesus after being condemned by Pilate?

A. He was scourged and crowned with thorns.

1. Pilate, the Roman governor, having condemned Jesus to be scourged, the soldiers stripped off His garments, tied Him to a pillar, and then cruelly scourged Him till His blood flowed copiously, and His sacred body became one great wound. When the soldiers had glutted their revenge by laying whips and scourges on the body of Jesus, they proceeded to other acts of cruelty. They platted a crown of sharp thorns, and forced them into His sacred head. They put a reed in His hands for a sceptre, and throwing an old garment on His

shoulders, they bent their knees in derision before Him, saying : "Hail, King of the Jews", and spitting on Him, they took the reed and struck Him on the face, and forced the thorns into His head. The face of God being covered with blood and with spittle, Pilate thinking that His appearance in that plight would move the Jews, took Him up into a place where He could be seen by all, and said: "Behold the Man". No sooner was Jesus seen with the crown of thorns, and the old garment, than the rude rabble cried out in horrid tones : "Crucify Him". Pilate replied, "Shall I crucify your king?" And they cried out : "We have no king but Cæsar". At the name of Cæsar, the fears of Pilate were aroused ; he had no wish to lose his rank and title by doing justice. He remounted his tribunal, and in spite of his remorse and his conviction that Jesus was innocent, he shamefully yielded to the cry of the Jews, and condemned Jesus to be crucified. Thus did the wretched Pilate deliver up Jesus to death, washing his hands before the people, and declaring himself innocent of the blood of that just Man. He was, however, punished even in this life for his crime. He was disgraced in the eyes of the emperor, was banished into Gaul, and not able to endure his sufferings, put an end to his life.

Q. What did Judas do on hearing that Jesus was condemned?

A. Judas, racked with remorse at his crime, went and hanged himself in despair.

2. When Judas learned that the Scribes had resolved to put Jesus to death, and had sent Him to Pilate to have the sentence confirmed, remorse took possession of his guilty soul ; and going back to the Temple with the thirty pieces of silver for which he had sold his Creator, said to the chief priests and

ancients, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood". But the chief priests cared not for what Judas felt. Their work had been done by him to their satisfaction, and they no longer had any interest about him. "What is that to us?" said they; "look thou to it". Have you not received the promised sum, and why then annoy us about your sin of shedding innocent blood? Upon this he threw down the money in the Temple, went his way, and hanged himself with a halter! Oh, the sad consequence of avarice! It was the love of money that induced him to sell his Lord; despair followed the commission of this crime, and made him a suicide. Wicked as he had been, had he had the courage to go to the feet of Jesus, and beg pardon for his sin, pardon would readily be granted. The chief priests, having taken up the silver, deliberated about what was to be done with it. It cannot be put into the "corbona", or treasure-box of the Church, they said, "for it is the price of blood". They then bought a "potters' field" for it, which was to be a burying-place for strangers. And this field was for ever after called the "Field of Blood".

Q. When sentence of death was pronounced on Jesus, what followed?

A. He was loaded with a heavy cross and led to Calvary where He was crucified between two thieves.

3. Sentence of death having been pronounced against Jesus, a huge rough cross was prepared, and laid on His sacred shoulders, on which He was to be nailed. Bearing this heavy, ignominious burden, and still wearing the crown of thorns, Jesus was led forth from Jerusalem, amidst the hisses and groans of a rabble that crowded around Him to witness His sufferings. Up Calvary's steep hill Jesus was compelled to drag His heavy weight; but weak, faint,

and weary, from the sufferings of the morning, He was not able to endure the load, nor move on as fast as His executioners wished. It was at this time that His Blessed Mother, coming up another way, met Jesus. Oh, what must she have suffered when she beheld that Son, whom she had so tenderly loved —whom she had so often watched and tended from His infancy—disfigured with bruises, covered with filthy spittle, crowned with painful thorns, and bearing a rude cross, which every moment was pressing Him down to the ground! Then it was, indeed, that the sword of sorrow, foretold by Simeon, pierced her tender heart. Our Lord, falling almost at every step under the heavy load of the cross, and forced by the blows of His executioners to rise again, proceeded on to Calvary. But at last His strength was so exhausted that a man named Simon, on his return from his house in the country, was called on to take our Lord's cross and carry it after Him.*

4. When Jesus had gained the top of Mount Calvary—which was a frightful dreary spot, being full of the bones and skulls of those who were executed there—He was at once presented with a draught of wine mixed with myrrh and gall. To criminals who were to be crucified, it was customary to give a drink of wine drugged, so as, in some measure to stupefy the senses, and thus lessen the tortures of crucifixion. But the draught presented to Jesus was made bitter with gall, that He might be deprived even of the little comfort allowed to the greatest criminals. Jesus took the cup and tasted it, but did not drink it, that He might not in the least deaden the sense of pain. He was then stripped of His clothes; and His executioners seizing Him, commanded Him to extend Himself on the cross. Our Lord did so, by stretching forth His arms and His feet; and when they were extended, His murderers

took thick, rough nails, and with heavy blows drove them through the hands and feet of Jesus, and then fastened them to the wood. Then the cross was raised aloft, and let fall, with a shock, into the hole dug in the ground for it, which gave additional pain to our Lord, by the shaking of His body. On each side of Him were crucified two thieves, as if He were the greatest criminal; and above His head was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, that all might know Him: JESUS OF NAZARETH, KING OF THE JEWS. Jesus hanging on the cross was looking to the west, Jerusalem and the east lying behind Him. The north was on His right, and the south on His left. In this position His eyes were turned towards Rome, situated in the west, where His Church was to be immediately founded by His principal Apostles, Peter and Paul.

Q. What did Jesus Christ suffer while hanging on the cross?

A. His executioners continued to outrage and insult Him, whilst He was praying for them, until He sent forth His last sigh.

5. Jesus remained for three hours hanging on the cross, with the whole weight of His body resting upon His bleeding wounds and hands. Placed between two thieves, He presented a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men. Jesus Christ bleeding and dying for the love of us! The populace looked on with hardened hearts, addressed Him in the most insulting tones, and derided Him in the most blasphemous language. Passing under His cross, they wagged their heads, and cried out scornfully: "If Thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. If He be the King of Israel, let Him come down from the cross, and we will believe in Him. Thou who canst destroy the temple of God, and in three days

build it up again, now save Thyself". The chief priests, the Scribes, and Elders, also ridiculed Him : " He saved others", they cried, " now let Him save Himself. He trusted in God, let God now deliver Him, if He will have Him ; for He said, I am the Son of God ". Jesus, thus loaded with insults and blasphemies, was still all love, all kindness, towards His executioners. His words breathed nothing but charity and benevolence. Looking down upon His enemies from His cross of ignominy and disgrace, He cursed them not ; He upbraided them not ; but His dying lips send forth for them this prayer : " Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do ". One of the thieves crucified with Him, joined in the blasphemous expressions of the Jews, saying : " If Thou be Christ, save Thyself and us ". The other thief rebuked his companion, and desired Christ to remember him when He should enter His kingdom ; and Jesus gave him this consoling answer : " Amen, I say to thee, this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (*Luke, xxiii.*).

6. Now was fulfilled Simeon's prophecy to the holy Virgin, for the Scripture goes on to say : " Now, there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother and His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalen ". Pierced with a sword of sorrow, Mary approached her Son and stood at the foot of the cross, with John, the beloved disciple of Christ. Jesus, looking down on them, recommended them, in His last dying words, to each other. To His mother He said : " Woman, behold thy son " ; and after that He said to His disciple : " Behold thy mother ". Knowing how well He was loved by those holy souls, and foreseeing the fearful void which His death would make in their hearts, He, in His adorable goodness, wished to unite them, that they may aid and solace each other ; and from that day St. John took the Blessed

Virgin to his own house, and he became a son to her, who had been so cruelly deprived of her own Son Jesus.*

7. About the ninth hour of the day, or three o'clock in the afternoon—a brilliant time of the day—a great darkness came over the face of the earth, the sun hiding itself, as it were, at the awful catastrophe of the death of the Son of God ; and at that awful moment our Lord cried out with a loud voice : “ My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? ” The cup of His sufferings seems then to have been filled up ; and knowing that all things were now accomplished—that is, that everything required for the salvation of man had been fulfilled—Jesus said : “ I thirst ”. When He had said this, the soldiers filled a sponge with vinegar and also with hyssop, which is a liquid extracted from a very bitter herb, and putting the sponge on a reed, touched the lips of our Lord with it. And when He had taken the vinegar, He said : “ It is consummated ” ; and then in the last gasp and agony of death, He cried out with a loud voice : “ Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit ”. When He had said this, He bowed His head, and the soul of our Lord leaving His body, He expired. All this time His blessed mother was standing at the foot of the cross, looking up at the agony of her dying Son. Oh, what must she have felt, when now she beheld Him pale, cold, and dead !

Jesus Christ ended His life in the thirty-second year of the Christian era, in the month of March, on Good Friday, at about three o'clock, and in the thirty-fourth year of His mortal life.

Q. Why do you call that day “ good ” on which Christ suffered so painful and ignominious a death ?

A. Because on that day, by dying on the cross,

He showed the excess of His love, and purchased every blessing for us.

8. The day on which Jesus Christ offered up His life for us on the cross, is called "Good" Friday, because it is the most illustrious, the most glorious, and the best of all Fridays, and because "on that day He showed the excess of His love for us"; for by His sufferings and death He rescued us from the tyranny of hell, stripped death of its terrors, destroyed the empire of sin, blotted out the curse that had been pronounced against us, re-established us in all our rights to heaven, "and purchased for us" every blessing—every favour that might lead us to His glorious kingdom. It is, too, called "good", on account of the holiness of the mysteries which are celebrated on that day. All the ceremonies, all the offices of Good Friday, point out the sadness and fear which should fill every Christian soul, at the remembrance of the dreadful torments which the Son of God endured for us. On that day, the Church puts on her mourning; no joyous tones are heard, but sad, plaintive strains, melting the heart with compunction and sorrow. No bell rings—not even is the holy sacrifice celebrated on that day; for the Church lays aside everything, except what may lead us to sympathise with Jesus, and excite in us grief and regret for our sins, which nailed Him to the cross.

Q. Who condemned Christ to so cruel a death?

A. Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, at the desire of the Jews.

9. "Pontius Pilate", who condemned Christ to be scourged and crucified, was, during two years, "governor" of Judea—a province of the Roman empire—under the Emperor Tiberius, and as governor had the

power of punishing capitally. As the Jewish priests had no power of inflicting capital punishments, Christ was carried by them to Pilate, that sentence of execution might be passed upon Him. Pilate, as we have already mentioned, seeing nothing worthy of death in Him, sent Jesus, as He was a Galilean, to Herod. However, yielding to the clamours of the Jews, the Roman governor ordered Him to be executed.

10. About a year after the death of our Lord, Pilate attempted to get possession of the treasures of the Temple, in order to construct an aqueduct. The people rose up against him, and the "Roman governor" had recourse to extreme measures to appease the seditious multitude. Caligula, Eusebius, and others, relate that Pilate was banished to Vienne, in Gaul, for behaving with barbarity to the Samaritans, and that, unable to endure his disgrace, he killed himself with his own hand, about the year 38. The Scala Santa, near the church of St. John Lateran in Rome, is said to be formed of the twenty-eight steps of the marble palace of Pilate; and pious Catholics, therefore, ascend it only on their knees. In the church itself is shown the inscription in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin, placed by Pilate on the cross.

Q. What do you infer from the sufferings and death of Christ?

A. The enormity of sin, the hatred God bears to it, and the necessity of satisfying for it.

11. There is nothing, dear children, that can so clearly point out to us "the enormity of sin" or its filthiness, as "the sufferings and death of Christ". God must, indeed, detest and hate it, when He demanded for its satisfaction the shedding of His own dear Son's blood. Nothing less would satisfy His eternal justice. Nothing else could remove the deep,

black, filthy stain of mortal sin. Such is the "hatred" in which God holds even one mortal sin, that all the good works which the saints have ever done, all their prayers, all their fasting, all their works of charity, could never be received as a satisfaction for it. Not all the blood of the eleven millions and more of martyrs which the Church honours; not all the love of the angels and archangels; not all the merits of Mary—the queen of Angels and saints, and the Mother of God—could atone for one mortal sin. Suppose that all those thousands of beautiful and shining stars, that you see every night twinkling in the sky, were so many worlds, each as large as this world of ours; and that all those worlds were peopled by saints who should have no other occupation, during millions of ages, but weeping and wailing at the foot of God's mercy-stool for a single mortal sin; well, those thousand millions of angels and saints crying out for a thousand millions of years, could not remove the slightest stain of mortal sin. All their prayers, all their tears, when put in the balance of divine justice, opposed to mortal sin, would be of no more consequence than a grain of sand in a balance against a mountain. And the reason is, that the malice of mortal sin is infinite, and all the merits of the angels and saints are limited in their value.

12. To "satisfy", then, for mortal sin, it was "necessary" that the Son of God should come down from His Father's bright throne, and leave behind happiness, and glory, and majesty, and become a poor outcast in this world, and walk this sinful earth for thirty-three years, and then surrender Himself up patiently to His enemies thirsting for His blood, and suffer stripes, and scorn, and insult, and reproach, and after that, die a death of torture on an ignominious cross, amid the sneers and derisions of

a brutal rabble. Oh! "the enormity" of mortal sin! It was not without reason that St. Catherine of Genoa said, "that if a sea of fire were on one side, and on the other a mortal sin, there was no person that understood the nature of mortal sin that would not at once rush into the burning sea, sooner than be associated with such a frightful monster". Oh! dear children, let nothing induce you to commit so frightful an offence as mortal sin. Suffer every pain, endure every torment, submit to every insult and wrong, sooner than fall into sin—that dreadful evil, to make satisfaction for which our good Jesus "suffered and died" on a cross.‡

Q. Did anything remarkable happen at the death of Christ?

A. Yes; "the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, and the dead arose and appeared to many" (*Mat.*, xxvii.).

13. When Jesus Christ expired on the cross three most wonderful events took place. The first was that "the sun was darkened". The sky became obscured, for the sun withdrew its light, and soon darkness spread over the face of the earth. The darkness of the sun on the death of Christ was clearly the effect of a miracle, for an eclipse could not have taken place at that time, for the moon was in opposition, or full; and no great knowledge of astronomy is required to show that when the moon is full there can be no eclipse of the sun. Again, St. Luke tells us that there was "darkness over all the face of the earth", from the sixth to the ninth hour, that is, during three hours; but it is well known that a total eclipse of the sun does not continue more than five minutes.

14. *The darkness of the sun at the death of Christ*

is attested by many learned writers. St. Denis the Areopagite, who was studying philosophy at Heliopolis in Egypt, alarmed at the darkness, cried out to his preceptor, Apollophanes : " Either the world is about to be destroyed or the God of nature suffers". Tertullian, in his " Apology", refers the pagans to their own annals, in which they would find recorded the extraordinary darkness that covered the face of the earth, when Jesus Christ expired on the cross. Phlegon, in his account of the Olympiads, makes mention of the same supernatural occurrence ; and in the Chinese annals this remarkable event is, too, recorded. These writers, and many others, leave no doubt of a total darkness having taken place in the year of Christ's death ; and as there could not be, by any possibility, an eclipse of the sun in that year, the darkness of which they speak can be no other than that mentioned by the Evangelists.

15. The second extraordinary event that took place was that "the earth trembled". When Jesus died, the earth tottered to its very foundations ; the rocks were split asunder, as if sympathizing with the agony of Jesus, and the clefts in the rocks ran in a direction so as to prove that they were split by some supernatural agency. Addison relates that an English traveller, a professed deist, visiting Jerusalem, endeavoured to turn into ridicule the explanations given by Catholics respecting the sacred places ; but the cleft in the rock disconcerted him not a little ; and after examining it carefully, " I begin to be a Christian", said he to a friend who accompanied him. " Natural philosophy has been long the matter of my study, and from philosophical observations I feel quite convinced that the clefts in the rock could not be produced by an ordinary earthquake. A natural shock would have assuredly split the rocks asunder, but then the clefts would be in a far different way.

The opening of the rock would follow the course of the veins ; but here, in this particular instance, it is quite the reverse. The rock is split transversely ; the cleft crosses the veins in an extraordinary and supernatural manner. I then evidently see that it is the pure effect of a miracle, as it could not be caused by nature or art. And it is for this reason", he adds, "that I return thanks to God for conducting me here to contemplate this monument of His marvellous power—a monument which proves, in the clearest light, the divinity of Jesus Christ".*

16. The third miracle that took place when Christ rendered up His last sigh, was the opening of the tombs and the resurrection of many who had been dead. St. Matthew tells us that "the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints that had slept arose, and coming out of the tombs after His resurrection, came into the holy city and appeared to many". St. John Chrysostom thinks that the graves were opened at the very moment that Jesus expired, and that the dead who then arose, accompanied our Lord into Limbo. The dead that "arose", he says, came into the holy city, that is, Jerusalem, "and appeared to many". And it is easier to imagine than describe the affright that their appearance must cause. But what became of them afterwards ? How long did they remain on earth after they arose from their graves ? Theophylactus is of opinion that they lived for some time on earth, and died again. But it is scarcely credible that, being saints, and so, secure of eternal salvation, they should be obliged to live again in this world of care and sin, and thus become exposed to the danger of falling away from the favour of God. It is, therefore, most probable, that the dead who arose from their graves with Jesus Christ

* On the Christian Religion vol. ii. p 12

(for the greater number of commentators on the Gospel think that the dead did not arise until Easter morning), after having fulfilled their mission—which was that of attesting the resurrection of our Saviour—quitted the world, without again dying, and ascended into heaven, both body and soul, on the day of Christ's ascension. This is the opinion of a great many writers on the Gospel, and in particular of the learned Maldonatus.

Q. What do these miracles prove ?

A. These miracles prove that Jesus Christ was truly the Son of God.

17. The miracles which we have just related were so many testimonies rendered to the divinity of Jesus Christ. If He had been merely man, would all nature have been so convulsed, and have so expressed its grief at the moment that He expired on the cross ? Would the veil of the temple have been rent asunder from top to bottom ? Would the sun have withdrawn its light, contrary to all the laws of nature, and during three hours have left the entire world in darkness ? Would the rocks have been split asunder ? In fine, would death, conquered and subjugated, have been compelled to abandon its prey ? Ah, it is only the death of a God that can account for such marvels ! So, the centurion and the soldiers, who presided at the execution, simultaneously cried out, that the Nazarene Prophet was certainly more than man ; and the immense concourse of people, who had upbraided Christ agonizing, with every species of insult and derision, descended the mountain striking their breasts, and repeating in tones of alarm : “ He was truly the Son of God ! *Vere Filius Dei erat iste !*”

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE MOTHER OF GOD ON HER WAY TO CALVARY.

* Crowds of spectators lined the streets, and encumbered the public ways. Some, in high tones of defiance, testified a brutal joy, and cried out "anathema" to the Son of God; others took pity on the sad fate of this young Prophet, who had, as they well knew, been basely betrayed and sold for no other crime than that of universal philanthropy. But these marks of barren sympathy were scarcely perceptible. The well-disposed mourned in silence; those who were indebted to Him for their support in the desert, by the miraculous multiplication of the five loaves; those who felt grateful to Him, as being to them the source of health and life; those who were linked to Him by the strong ties of love and affection, could scarcely be recognised in the crowd, and not a voice was raised to protest against the inhuman sentence. The Apostle who had previously expressed such ardent professions of love, was now after basely denying Him! The rest, with one single exception, had cowardly fled.

As He was descending the long line of street which leads to the Judiciary Gate, a woman conspicuous for beauty of person and for that affable sweetness of demeanour which truly stamps nobleness of origin, rushes through the crowd. She appeared wholly absorbed in silent and inexpressible sorrow. Poignant indeed must be her grief, and great her sufferings, so pallid was her appearance. The look which she fixed on the frightful wounds of the Saviour was so expressive of inward grief and holy sadness, that the women of Jerusalem, on beholding her, were unable to restrain their tears, or withhold their expressions of sympathy. "Ah! the poor Mother!" said they, in low and faltering tones.

She glided through the populace, who, moved by an instinct of pity and sympathy, fell back to open for her a passage.

Some of the Pharisees, more hardened than the others, were with opprobrious epithets upbraiding Jesus, now bathed in sweat, and expiring under the heavy load of the cross, but she hears them not; the foreign soldiery who surrounded her Son, were threatening Him with menacing gestures, but she sees them not; but when their spears, the points directed towards her breast, were interposed between her and Jesus, then did there flash from her large and fixed eyes, a ray of brightness which revealed the Blood of David, and her glowing and inspired countenance assumed such an expression of

Mournful grandeur and cold contempt of death, that the soldiers, abashed, slowly lowered their arms before the heroic and holy woman. Though wild and truculent in disposition, consequent on military service, the recollection of a mother's claims was not extinct.—*Orsini's Life of the Blessed Virgin.*

MARY'S SUFFERINGS DURING THE CRUCIFIXION OF HER SON.

† During an interval of profound silence, caused undoubtedly by some fresh scene of barbarity, which attracted the attention of the multitude, there was heard the sound of a hammer—a heavy monotonous sound, falling, as it appeared, on wood and mangled flesh. Magdalen, shuddering, presses more closely against Mary. The Disciple well-beloved by Jesus, through an instinctive feeling, assumes an erect position against the grotto.

Again was heard a second stroke, heavier and more stunning than the first. It was followed by two or three others falling at equal intervals, and then all was hushed. "See", was the observation of one of the Roman soldiers to his companion, "they have nailed Him to the cross". John and Magdalen interchanged a look of desolation and woe; they were impressed by a feeling similar to that which a person experiences, who, in the midst of a nocturnal tempest, hears the cries of the shipwrecked mariners coming over the wide waste waters, and then dying away one by one in the depths of the sea. But Mary! a cold perspiration suffuses her whole frame; a convulsive trembling agitates her limbs; she, too, poor, feeble, desolate woman, then felt all the pangs of a crucifixion; for never did confessor extended on a rack—never did a martyr in the midst of flames, experience either in soul or body such excruciating tortures.

Soon is heard the friction of the cords on the pulleys. The cross is slowly raised aloft; and the Son of Man, His face turned towards those regions of the West which were in long expectation of the light, was hoisted as a standard to the view of infidel nations; so it was written! Then did the reprobate rabble send forth a hoarse and lengthened roar of brutal joy, "Hail! King of the Jews!" "If God loves Him, let Him deliver Him". "If thou art the Son of God, Nazarene, descend". And the robber crucified on His left, in the very rattles of death, also cursed Him.—*Orsini's Life of the Blessed Virgin.*

ST. THOMAS' ANSWER, AND ST. PHILIP BENITIUS AND THE CRUCIFIX.

‡ St. Thomas, when on a visit with St. Bonaventure, asked

him one day, from what book he derived his great knowledge, and where he had been taught to speak with such holy unction? "*At the foot of my crucifix*", answered St Bonaventure, pointing at the same time to the crucifix before him. "*This is my book*", said he; "*Jesus Christ is my master*". This great saint so often kissed his crucifix, that it retained the marks of the pressure of his lips. He used to say, that, from the wounds of our Lord proceeded glorious darts, capable of softening the hardest hearts and enkindling the coldest souls. St. Philip Benitius, when on the point of death, said: "*Give me my book*". "What book is it that you want?" asked one standing by. When the crucifix was pointed out to him by another: "Yes", said he; "*that is my book*". And after having kissed it with the greatest sentiments of respect and love, he breathed forth his last sigh.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Describe the scourging and crowning of Jesus Christ.
2. What had been the fate of Judas Iscariot?
3. Whom did Jesus meet on His ascent to Calvary?
4. In what manner was Jesus fastened to the cross?
5. When hanging on the cross, was He insulted by the Jews?
6. What were the words of Jesus to His mother and St. John?
7. Describe the last scene of Christ's death.
8. Why do you call the day, on which Christ died, good?
9. Who was Pontius Pilate? How did he die?
10. Mention the circumstances of Pilate's death.
11. Could any one but Christ atone for the guilt of mortal sin?
12. What did St. Catherine say of mortal sin?
13. What occurred when Jesus Christ died?
14. Has the darkness of the sun at the death of Christ been attested by many writers?
15. Relate the second extraordinary miracle on the death of Christ.
16. What was the third miracle on the death of Christ?
17. What do you infer from those miracles?

PRACTICE.

1. Often think of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, and beg of

Him patience and resignation to His holy will, under all the sufferings that you endure here below.

2. When you are assailed by impure thoughts, cast your eyes on your crucified Redeemer, and ask Him, through all He suffered for you, to preserve you from yielding to sin.

PRAYER.

O divine Redemeer! how can we sufficiently thank Thee for Thy great love for us? To redeem our souls, Thou hast shed on the cross even the last drop of Thy pure blood! We shall never, dear Lord, be unmindful of Thy excessive goodness, but shall treasure up in our hearts the remembrance of the sufferings and indignities Thou hast endured for us. O holy Mother of God! pray, that we may never be wanting in gratitude to thy divine Son. Amen.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ON CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO HELL, AND ON HIS RESURRECTION.

Q. Where did Christ's soul go after His death?
A. It descended into hell.—*Apoc. Creed.*

1. As death is the separation of the soul from the body, so, when Jesus Christ died, His soul was separated from His body, and continued so separated until His resurrection on Easter Sunday. But the divinity of Christ was not for a moment separated either from His soul or from His body, but continued always united to both one and the other. During the whole time that the body of Christ was hanging on the cross, and whilst it remained in the grave, His divinity was united to it; so that His body then, equally as when united to His soul, was the body of the Son of God, and as such entitled to our respect and adoration.

2. After the death of Jesus, Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Christ, went boldly to Pilate,

and begged the sacred body of our Lord. Pilate, understanding that Jesus was dead, commanded that the body should be delivered to Joseph. Then Joseph and Nicodemus went and bought some beautiful fine linen in a shop, and, together with Mary Magdalen and other holy women, proceeded to Calvary to take down their Lord from the cross. When they arrived at the top of Calvary, they placed a ladder against the cross, and after drawing out the nails from the hands and feet of Jesus, and removing the crown of thorns, they lowered the body into the arms of the Blessed Virgin, who received that lifeless form upon her breast.

3. Then the holy women washed and embalmed our Lord's body, and wrapped it up in a winding-sheet of the fine linen with spices ; and when wrapped up it was laid on a bier, and carried to the garden of Joseph of Arimathea, and there laid in a grave, cut out of a rock in the garden, called in Scripture a New Monument, and against the door of the monument Joseph rolled a great stone for safety. But when the soul of our Lord left His body—having still the divinity united to it, as it always had been from the instant of His conception—"it descended into hell", and remained there as long as the body was in the grave.

Q. Did Christ's soul descend into the hell of the damned?

A. No; but to a place of rest called Limbo.—*Acts*, ii. 24, 27.

4. The Scripture points out to us three places in the bowels of the earth, which go by the general name of hell:—1. "The hell of the damned", which is often called gehenna, and the abyss or bottomless pit, and hell-fire—this is "hell", properly so called, as being the deepest of all, and at the greatest dis-

tance from heaven. 2. The prison of Purgatory, where those who have died in venial sin, or who have not fully satisfied for the temporal punishment due to mortal sin, are detained until they are cleansed and purified from every stain and imperfection, and have fully satisfied for what they owe the divine justice, by "paying the last farthing", is also called hell. It is in this sense that the word "hell" is to be understood, when, in the Mass for the Dead, the Church prays to God to deliver the souls of the faithful from the pains of hell. 3. The prison of "Limbo", where the souls of the patriarchs and prophets, and of all the just who died before the coming of Christ, were detained, awaiting the coming of the Redeemer, is likewise called "hell". Into this last place, "Limbo", it was that the soul of Christ descended at His death. "Limbo" is, too, called paradise; for it was of "Limbo" that Jesus Christ spoke, when He said to the good thief: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise".

Q. Who were in Limbo?

A. The souls of the saints who died before Christ.

5. "In Limbo" were the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of all the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, who had often preached to many of the Jews, and tried every means to convert them to God, but all to no purpose. "In Limbo" were, too, all the good and holy souls "who died before Christ". Among the Jews who died in favour with God, St. Joseph, the guardian of our Lord and spouse of the Blessed Virgin, was there—the greatest of all the souls detained in that place of rest.

Q. Why did Christ descend into Limbo?

A. St. Peter says, "to preach to those spirits

that were in prison"; that is, to announce to them the joyful tidings of their redemption.—*I. Peter*, iii. 19.

6. Jesus Christ "descended into Limbo", dear children, to preach to those holy souls who were there confined. When He entered Limbo, He "announced to them the joyful tidings of their redemption", by explaining to them fully the mysteries of His passion and death. He told them all that He had done for mankind in order to redeem them. And then He filled them with joy by saying to them that their term of confinement was now at an end, and that in a short time they would ascend up, in company with Him, to the bright and glorious dwelling of His eternal Father. Oh! what happy and delightful news was this to "those blessed spirits" in Limbo! They had nothing more at heart than to be delivered out of their long confinement, and admitted to the clear light and enjoyment of God. This was the great object they had long wished for; and the delay of this ardent desire was the only thing that could give them pain. When, therefore, the blessed soul of Jesus entered their prison, and when they looked on His beautiful divine countenance, and when they had heard from His heavenly lips the "joyful tidings" that their redemption was fully paid, and that the day of their release was at last come, joy and gladness filled their souls, and their dreary prison was changed into a paradise of delight and glory.

Q. Why did not the souls of the saints who died before Christ go to heaven immediately after their death?

A. Because heaven was shut against them by the sin of our first parents, and could not be opened to any one but by the death of Christ.

7. All the just souls who died before the coming of Christ, could not "go to heaven immediately after their death"; for, on account of the sin of Adam and Eve, "heaven was shut against them" and all their posterity, and could only be opened "by the death of Christ". That the patriarchs and prophets, and all the just souls of the old law, should enter heaven, it was first necessary that the blood of Jesus Christ should blot out the hand-writing of sin and death recorded against them on account of our first parents' transgression—it was necessary that He, as our precursor, should first enter, and with His cross burst open the brazen gates which sin had closed, and re-establish that happy intercourse between God and man which had been interrupted for so many years.

Q. When did the souls of the saints who died before Christ go to Heaven?

A. When Christ ascended into Heaven.

8. "The souls of the saints who died before Christ" did not leave Limbo immediately after the visit of our Lord to them. Their sojourn in that place was prolonged until the day of Christ's *ascension* into Heaven, and that event did not take place until the fortieth day after His resurrection, and consequently the forty-third day after His descent into the prison of Limbo. On Ascension-day, when He mounted up to Heaven, all the holy souls in Limbo were set free; all the ancient holy patriarchs, prophets, and other saints, against whom until then the gates of Heaven had been shut, were carried up in triumph to His glorious kingdom, by their Redeemer: "He hath led captivity captive" They were formerly captives of the devil and sin: Christ having powerfully rescued them from that

tyranny, leads them to heaven as the trophies of His victory, as the rich spoils taken by Him, as the proofs of the overthrow of the enemy, as the price of His adorable blood, and as the ornament and glory of His holy triumph. In company with Him they pierced the highest heavens, and were placed on bright, glorious seats in His Father's Kingdom, where they shall reign for ever and ever.

Q. Where was Christ's body when His soul was in Limbo ?

A. In the sepulchre or grave.

9. We have already said, dear children, that when our Lord's body was taken down from the cross, it was laid "in the sepulchre", or a new-made grave. In that grave it remained during the night of Good Friday, all Holy Saturday, and a part of the morning of Easter Sunday. When Jesus was laid in the "grave", the Scribes and Pharisees, pretending that there was a design on the part of Christ's disciples to steal away His body, and then of spreading a report of His being risen from the dead, came to Pilate, and desired him to order a guard around "the sepulchre", to prevent any one from coming near it for three days. Pilate said to them, " You have a guard ; go, guard it as you know". They went immediately, and having made the sepulchre sure, by sealing the stone, they placed the soldiers around to watch outside the sepulchre. All this time the body of Christ our Lord remained in the tomb perfectly pure, entire, and free from the least corruption ; and during that time, as we said before, His divinity continued united to it.

Q. On what day did Christ rise from the dead ?

A. On Easter Sunday, the third day after He

was crucified, He arose in body and soul, glorious and immortal, from the dead.—*Apos. Creed.*

10. As the day began to dawn “on Easter Sunday, the third day” after the death of our Lord on the cross, His soul left Limbo, and was again united to His body, now bright and glorified. He then burst the bandages by which He had been bound in death, and by His own divine power came forth from the tomb, full of life, “glorious and immortal”. He stepped forth from the grave without breaking the door of the sepulchre. It is one of the properties of a “glorious” body to be able to penetrate the hardest substances, so Jesus Christ penetrated the stone which closed up the sepulchre; He passed through, leaving the seal, affixed to the door of the monument, untouched. At the same moment an Angel of the Lord descended from heaven, rolled back the stone, and seated himself on it: “and his countenance was as lightning, and his raiment as snow”. And the guards who were placed around to watch the sepulchre were so terrified by a sudden earthquake, and by the appearance of an Angel sitting on the stone, that they became as dead men. When they recovered from the state of terror in which they were thrown, they at once fled to Jerusalem, and told the chief priests what they had seen. The chief priests, alarmed at the report, met together in council, and consulted about what they should do. The decision come to by them was to bribe the guard, to stop their mouths with money, and try to induce them to say that during the night they had fallen asleep, and that in the meantime the disciples of Jesus came and stole away His body. The soldiers took the money, published the false story, which soon was circulated among the people.*

11. Mary Magdalen, and some other holy women

having rested on the Sabbath—as rest on that day was prescribed by the Jewish law—arose at break of dawn on the morning of Easter Sunday; and, with hearts full of love for Jesus, came to the sepulchre with spices, that they may anoint the body of our Lord. On their way to the sepulchre, they remembered the heavy stone with which it was closed up, and they said to each other: “Who shall roll away the stone for us?” But as they approached the place they saw the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, the entrance open, and two young men, in shining garments—no other than Angels—seated within the monument. And the Angels said to them: “Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen”. St. Peter and St. John, being told what had happened, immediately repaired to the monument. St. John, in his great love for our Lord, having outrun St. Peter, got there first, and stooping down looked into the sepulchre, saw that Jesus was not there, but he did not go in. St. Peter went in, and saw the linen clothes, in which our Lord’s body had been wrapped, lying inside, and the napkin which had been about His head folded up apart from the linen clothes; and not being able to discover anything more, both returned to their home.

12. Mary Magdalen, however, remained behind, standing and weeping at the door of the sepulchre. Eager to find whom she loved, she stooped down, and looking into the sepulchre saw two Angels sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body had lain. And the Angels said to her: “Woman, why weepest thou?” And she answered: “Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid Him”. And as she said this she turned around, and seeing a man standing there unknown to her, took him for a gardener,

and said : "Sir, if you have taken Him away, let me know where thou hast laid Him, and I will take Him away". Jesus said to her : "Mary !" Mary knew Him at the word, and, filled with joy, turned round and answered, "Rabboni", which means master. She would have thrown herself at His feet, and again covered them with kisses ; but Jesus said to her : "Do not touch Me, for I am not yet ascended to My Father ; but go to My brethren, and say to them, I ascend to My Father and to your Father, to My God and to your God". Then Mary went joyfully to find the Apostles, and when she found them she said : "I have seen the Lord, and these things He said to me" (*John, xx. 15, 18.*)

Q. What does the Resurrection of Christ prove ?

A. That as by dying on the cross He showed Himself a real mortal man, so by raising Himself from the dead, He proved Himself God.

13. Jesus Christ, by shedding His blood and by "dying on the cross", proved that He was man ; for if He were only God and not man, He could not suffer nor die, for the Divine Nature is not liable to any of the infirmities of humanity—much less is it liable to death. Jesus Christ, as God, could neither suffer hunger, nor thirst, nor pain, nor sorrow, nor anxiety, nor care. He could not be subject to any of the evils of life—sickness or death could not approach Him. But as He endured through life all the evils to which men are subject, and after suffering these evils then really died, He must necessarily be man ; for as God He could neither suffer nor die.

14. "By raising Himself from the dead He proved Himself God". There can be no more convincing

proof of the divinity of Jesus Christ than His resurrection from the dead ; for if it be proved that He arose from the dead, then He must be God, and the religion which He preached must be from heaven ; and, consequently, we are bound to believe everything taught us by that divine religion, and practise all the duties prescribed by it, no matter at what cost and at what sacrifice. That Jesus Christ arose from the dead by His own divine power, is a fact of which not the slightest doubt can be entertained. The circumstances of His resurrection—the evidence of those who often saw Him and spoke with Him after His resurrection—who ate with Him and touched His wounds, and then sealed the truth of their testimony with their blood, clearly prove that Jesus arose from the dead.

15. The circumstances of Christ's resurrection are these :—When the morning of the third day after Jesus Christ's death began to dawn, the earth quaked violently. That was the signal of His resurrection ; and it was then that Christ arose from the tomb, full of life, glory, and immortality. He arose from the tomb, leaving the seal which closed up the entrance of the tomb untouched. At the same time an Angel descended from heaven, rolled away the stone, and sat on it. His face shone like lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow. All this made such an impression on the minds of the guards that they were seized with affright, and fell down as persons dead.

16. The evidence of the Apostles as to the resurrection of Christ their Master is undoubted ; for the nature of their depositions rejects the notion of their being deceived respecting the fact. If Jesus Christ had appeared but once or twice to two or three of His disciples, and then had only spoken to them a few passing words, there might be reason to infer

that they were deceived as to the presence of their Master; but He appeared often and often to them; He appeared to all the Apostles, and to more than five thousand disciples at the same time; and during these repeated apparitions had lengthened conversations with them. The Gospel tells us that He appeared first to Magdalen to recompense her faith and love for Him; then to the pious women who came to embalm His body; after this to St. Peter, chief of the Apostles; to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus; and to the eleven Apostles who were assembled in a room, the doors being shut. He showed them the wounds in His hands, feet, and side; He ate and drank with them; He explained the Scriptures to them; He unfolded to them the great truths which they were to preach to the nations; He conferred on them great powers, among which was that of loosing and retaining sin. He instructed them; He consoled and encouraged them; He foretold the persecutions that they were to meet with, and traced out for them the line of conduct which they were to pursue. To suppose that all these different interviews, and these many and varied discourses, were so many delusions, is the highest piece of absurdity and folly. So many details, and so connected and circumstantial an account, will not allow us to call in question the evidence of those who deposite to all these facts.

17. What adds the greatest weight to their evidence is, their slowness of belief, and for this they were often reproached by Jesus Christ, both during His life and after His resurrection. When, a short time before His death, He foretold them, for the third time, that He would rise again from the dead, so faint was the idea they had of it, that they scarcely understood what He said. It was to them, according to St. Luke, a riddle which they could not unravel.

When on the very morning of Christ's resurrection, the "holy women" related to them what they had seen, so far from believing their narration, they considered it as the result of a disordered imagination; and when, at last, they themselves beheld Him for the first time, they thought they saw a ghost. But men with minds so disposed could not, surely, be easily imposed upon; and when, at last, they became convinced of the reality of what they had so much difficulty in believing, we may rest assured that they yielded only to the clearest evidence. The Apostles could not, then, be led into error regarding the fact of Christ's resurrection.

18. Jesus Christ has then arisen from the dead, and so has "proved Himself God". "Jesus Christ has arisen, then", says Plowden; "there is an end to all discussion—every doubt is removed; He is indeed what He has declared Himself, the only Son of God, equal to His Father. He has arisen; the edifice of His religion then is founded on a firm base, against which the storms of ages may rage, but in vain; against which all the efforts of hell may be directed, but to no purpose, except to prove its stability".* If Christ has arisen, then the witnesses must be believed, and the truths which they taught and delivered must be received. The prophecies which foretold the resurrection, with all the other truths contained in the inspired writings, must be acknowledged as true; and all these being admitted, Christianity is undoubtedly the religion of God.†

Q. Might not the Apostles have been impostors, and so forged the account of Christ's resurrection?

A. Such a supposition could not for a moment be entertained.

19. That the Apostles were deceivers, and made

* Plowden on the Mysteries.

the world believe that Christ had arisen from the dead, when they were convinced of the very contrary, is a thing utterly impossible. For if they were persuaded that Jesus had not arisen, they must consider Him an impostor who had grossly deceived them, by telling them that on the third day after His death He would arise again full of life and immortality. When Jesus was among them, and when they had every reason to rely on the truth of His promises, they fled away from Him, lest their lives should be compromised by their being seen with Him; and now, when their Master is no more, and when they are convinced, as it is said, that His repeated promises were false, they must, indeed, show themselves full of courage and zeal for His interest! In thus acting the part of impostors, what could be their object? What end could they have proposed to themselves? They must have said to each other, "Jesus Christ was a cheat; but no matter, let us become impostors, and try to persuade the world that He was God. In so doing, true, indeed, we will, neither reap honours nor riches: but severe chastisement will await us here and hereafter, and deservedly; but no matter, let us make every sacrifice to render that man, who so cruelly deceived us, an object of adoration to the whole world". Fired by a project so opposed to all their interests, those ignorant, cowardly men must, indeed, become all at once enlightened, brave, and intrepid, and their design become successful! Credulous, indeed, must that man be, who prefers such an absurdity to the plain, unvarnished Gospel narrative.

20. Again, if there had been fraud practised at first by the Apostles, there is little doubt but some one of them would have afterwards divulged it; for that all should combine to practise imposition, and to persevere in the practice of it, and even to die for

what they knew to be false, is impossible. There were five hundred who saw Christ after His resurrection ; and all, without a single exception, persevered in their testimony, and nearly all laid down their lives for this great truth. These witnesses were simple men, strangers to the art of deception, and very unlikely to attempt the propagation of error, at the peril of their lives, and in the face of powerful and formidable enemies. The Apostles, in publishing the resurrection of Jesus Christ, were not, then, deceivers, neither could they, as we have seen before, have been deceived ; therefore the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a truth which cannot be denied by any one gifted with intelligence and reason. Jesus Christ is, then, the Son of God, equal in all things to His Father ; for by His Resurrection from the dead He has proved Himself so. Ah ! dear children, how our hearts should be filled with lively sentiments of joy and gratitude, at the thought of this glorious and consoling mystery of our holy religion.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATION.

ST. VICTOR'S ANSWER ON THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

* During the persecution of the Emperor Maximinian, a Christian officer, named Victor, used to go at night from house to house, exhorting his fellow-Christians to despise the terrors of death, and inspiring them with a desire of eternal happiness. Having been detected at Marseilles, whilst engaged at this charitable work—so worthy of a soldier of Christ—he was conducted before the judge, who represented to him the great folly he was guilty of, in adoring a dead man—it was thus he called Jesus—and thus destroying the fruit of his past services, and forfeiting the favour of his prince. Victor returned this answer : “ All the favours and advantages I could possibly enjoy, I would renounce sooner

than deny Jesus Christ, the eternal son of God, who deigned to become man and die for our salvation ; but who of His own power rose again the third day after His death, and who now reigns in heaven with His Father, to whom He is equal in all things". A few days after, Victor fell under the sword of the persecutor.

THE HOUSE OF HESPERIUS INFESTED WITH EVIL SPIRITS.

† St. Augustin relates the following incident in his work "Of the City of God". The house of a certain nobleman, named Hesperius, was infested with evil spirits, which caused him no little annoyance and pain. One of his friends, who had returned from the Holy Land, presented him with some of the sacred dust taken from the place where Christ arose from the dead. Full of faith, Hesperius deposited the sacred relic in his chamber, and at once the evil spirits were chased from his dwelling. St. Augustin paying a visit some time after to the place in which Hesperius lived, and being told of the extraordinary effect produced by the sacred dust, counselled him to erect an oratory in which it may be preserved with that decency becoming it. When the oratory had been built, a young man, who had been paralyzed, was carried thither, and after offering up a fervent prayer to God, was, by virtue of the sacred relic, cured on the spot.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. When Christ died, did His divinity remain united to His body ?
2. By whom was Jesus taken down from the cross ?
3. Where was the body of Jesus interred ?
4. What do you mean by the hell into which Christ descended ?
5. What souls were detained in the prison of Limbo ?
6. Why could not the just who died before Christ go to Heaven ?
7. On what day did the just souls enter Heaven ?
8. How long was Christ's body in the grave ?
9. Describe the circumstances of Christ's resurrection .
10. What did the holy women behold at the monument ?
11. Did Jesus Christ appear to Magdalen ?
12. How did Jesus Christ prove himself a mortal man ?

13. Can we be certain that Christ arose from the dead?
14. Could not the Apostles be deceived as to the resurrection of Christ?
15. What were the circumstances of Christ's resurrection?
16. Were the minds of the Apostles so disposed as to believe, on light grounds, that their Master had arisen?
17. What is there against the supposition that the Apostles were impostors?
18. What says Plowden on Christ's resurrection?
19. Is it absurd to suppose that the Apostles could be deceivers?
20. If the Apostles had been deceivers, could the fraud succeed for any time?

PRACTICE.

1. In repeating these words of the Creed, "He descended into hell, the third day He arose again from the dead", recollect that the resurrection of Christ is the foundation of our religion; that as He arose from the dead He is God, and consequently that everything He said is true.
2. Often think that if you serve God here below, you will one day arise in glory.
3. Always pray that you may so die to sin, as to participate in Christ's glorious resurrection.

PRAYER.

O sweetest Jesus! we give Thee thanks for all Thy favours and graces. Oh, that we had never sinned against Thee! Give us the grace to rise at once from sin—to rise with Thee truly and sincerely—to rise with Thee everlasting, that, after imitating Thy resurrection, we may enjoy the splendour of Thy glory hereafter. Oh, do not forsake or abandon us at the hour of death, but stand by and protect us, that being sheltered under the wings of Thy mercy, we may awake to a glorious immortality! Amen.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ON THE ASCENSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

Q. How long did Christ remain on earth after His resurrection?

A. Forty days, to show that He was truly risen from the dead, and to instruct His Apostles.

1. Jesus Christ, dear children, remained on earth "forty days" after He arose from the dead. On Easter morning, and during those forty days, He gave clear proofs of His resurrection. He had no sooner arisen from the grave, than He appeared to Mary Magdalen, under the appearance of a gardener. On the evening of the very day of His resurrection, He appeared in the midst of His disciples, although the doors of the house in which they were assembled were closely barred. In presenting Himself before them, He pronounced these words: "Peace be to you; it is I; fear not". But the Apostles were troubled and filled with alarm, and thought they beheld a ghost. And Jesus said to them: "Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see Me have". After He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet, and they were greatly rejoiced at seeing the Lord.

2. Thomas, surnamed Didymus, one of the twelve, was not present when the Lord appeared to His disciples, and when he arrived, they at once said to him: "We have seen the Lord". And Thomas answered: "Unless I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into His side, I will not

believe". Eight days after, when His disciples were assembled in the same place, and Thomas with them, Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst of them, and after saying, "Peace be to you", He asked St. Thomas to look at His hands, to put His hand into His side, and told Him not to be incredulous but faithful. St. Thomas said: "My Lord and my God". "You have believed, Thomas", said Jesus to him, "because you have seen; but blessed are they that have not seen, but yet have believed". Within the "forty days" He again appeared many times to His disciples; and to prove to them that He had real flesh and blood, equally then as before His death, He ate and drank with them, although He stood not in need of sustenance. St. Paul tells us that He was seen, on one occasion, by above five hundred brethren.

3. During these many apparitions, Christ "instructed His Apostles" in the duties which they were to perform when He should leave them, telling them at one time that whatever they should bind or loose on earth, He would bind or loose in heaven; at another time, He commissioned them to "go and teach all nations", saying that He should be with them "all days, even to the consummation of the world". He opened their eyes that they might understand the Scriptures, and promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, who should teach them all truth. Our Blessed Saviour having thus laid the foundations of His Church on a strong basis, and having commanded His Apostles and their successors to govern it, was then pleased to remove Himself from this world, and to take possession of that glory and happiness which were due to His victory over sin and death. During the "forty days" He remained on earth, He did not live with His Apostles, as He had done before His death: and the reasons were, that He

might conceal Himself from the Jews and the impious, who were unworthy of His presence; that He might show the difference between His mortal and glorious life; and also that He might make His resurrection a model for our spiritual resurrection from sin, by pointing out that when we arise from the grave of sin, we must truly, as He did, shun this world, and live for a better.

Q After Christ had remained forty days on earth, where did He go?

A. On Ascension day He ascended from Mount Olivet with His body and soul into heaven.—
Ap. Cr.

4. The "forty days" during which Jesus Christ had given clear proof of His resurrection, having passed on, He presented Himself to His disciples in the "upper room", at the very time that they were partaking of their repast. He sat down at the table with them to remove all doubt of the reality of His presence. After telling them, in order to console them, that He would not leave them orphans, but would immediately send them down the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who would abide with them, and teach them all truth; that after a little time they should see Him again, and that their hearts should then rejoice, and that this joy no one should take from them; after consoling them in this way, He led them out of the city of Jerusalem to a neighbouring mountain, called Mount Olivet, and there, after lifting up His hands, and like a loving Father given them His last blessing, He raised Himself up from the top of the mount into the upper regions of air, and ascended "with His body and soul into Heaven". His disciples fixed their eyes upon Him as He ascended through the air, till an intervening cloud

received Him from their sight. By His own divine power He ascended into Heaven. He did not, like Elias, require a fiery chariot to bear Him aloft, for Jesus, as God, could leave this earth and enter the highest Heavens by the mere act of His divine will.*

5. The illustrious Bossuet, speaking of this mystery, makes the following comparison :—“A prince who has to engage in a mighty war with a remote nation, and to fight against his enemies upon their own ground, quits for a time his kingdom. The war over, he returns to the capital of his kingdom in great pomp and glory—his retinue and chariots decorated with the spoils of the conquered nation. In like manner, the Son of God, our King, wishing to destroy the empire of the demon, descends Himself upon earth to vanquish this irreconcileable foe ; and having deprived him of his throne by those arms which, if wielded by any other hands than those of God, would prove weak and ineffectual, nothing more remains to be done by Him except to return in triumph to heaven, the place of His origin and the principal seat of His kingdom”.

6. Whilst the disciples, in the meantime, were standing on Mount Olivet, with their eyes fixed on the cloud which had taken their dear Lord out of their sight, two Angels, in the shape of young men, and clothed in white garments, appeared to them, and said : “O men of Galilee !”—for they were natives of that country—“ why stand ye gazing up to heaven ? This same Jesus who is taken up from ye into Heaven, so shall He come, as ye have seen Him going up to Heaven”. Having heard these words, the disciples returned to Jerusalem filled with great joy (*Acts, i. 2*).

You have now heard, dear children, the history of what occurred on the fortieth day after Christ’s resurrection from the dead. To celebrate this glorious

mystery, a great festival is observed by the Church every year on the fortieth day after Easter Sunday, and that day is called the Feast of the Ascension. The word ascension means to mount up; and since Jesus, as you have already heard, mounted up to heaven without any external aid, but by His own divine power, the day on which we commemorate that great miracle is called Ascension-day.

Q. Is Jesus Christ any more on earth?

A. Jesus Christ is still upon earth by His real and corporal presence in the Blessed Eucharist.

7. Although Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, He has not altogether withdrawn His corporal presence from us; for by a wonderful effect of His omnipotence, He remains present in the adorable Eucharist, and takes up His dwelling in our tabernacles, as our Faith teaches us. He is, too, spiritually present with His Church, continually enlightening it with His Spirit, as He had promised to His apostles when He said to them: "I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (*Matt.*, xxvii. 20).

Q. Where is Christ in Heaven?

A. "He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty" (*Apoc. Creed*).

8. Yes, dear children, Christ is now sitting "at the right hand" of His heavenly Father, and so is fulfilled the prophecy of David, which the Church recalls to our minds every Sunday in the vesper service: "The Lord said to my Lord: Sit on my right hand" (*Ps. cix.*). That is, the Lord God, the eternal Father, said to my Lord, His Son, God equally as He: "Sit on My right hand". How just and how expres-

sive is that sentence of the supreme dignity of the Messiah, whom the Prophet king beheld in spirit among his descendants ! The words of the Psalmist point out the distinctive character of our Redeemer, the character which He has attributed to Himself, and by which He wishes to be recognised ; a character which raises Him above the highest intelligences of Heaven, says St. Paul : "but to which of the angels has God ever said : Sit you on My right hand"? (*Heb.*, i. 13). This is, dear children, that we profess as an article of our belief, when we recite in the Creed : "He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty".

9. How many good and salutary reflections ought we not make on the Ascension of Christ and His sitting "at the right hand" of His Father! Oh, how many advantages arise to us from His being seated on the right hand of His Father! Jesus Christ has ascended to Heaven, to confirm our faith in all the truths which He had announced whilst He was on earth. Jesus Christ ascended into Heaven, to procure for His sacred humanity the glory to which it was entitled, and to find a dwelling worthy of His glorious state. Jesus Christ, now sitting "at the right hand of" His Father, continues the great work of our redemption, by exercising the office of advocate in our favour. He is at the right hand of His Father, still our Mediator, our Redeemer, our High Priest, our Victim, our King, our Judge, our Physician, our loving Friend, having our interests at heart, and desirous of nothing so much as that we should fill those seats which He has gone before us to prepare. We should often, children, turn our thoughts and desires towards that blessed mansion which God has promised us if we love Him here below. In this world we are only strangers and pilgrims, passing on through it for a few days ;

Heaven is our true country, and to that glorious place we should always tend—every word and thought should be directed to the gaining of that true and happy home. Oh, children, what happiness is reserved for us! The delights and glories of Heaven we will for ever enjoy, if for a short time we love and serve God in this world.†

Q. What do you mean by saying that Christ sits at the right hand of God?

A. I mean that Christ, as God, is equal to His Father in all things; and as Man, is in the highest place in Heaven, next to God in power and glory.

10. When we are told that Jesus Christ is sitting in Heaven, "at the right hand of God" His Father, we are not to understand these words in a literal sense, as meaning that Jesus Christ sits in Heaven as a king sits on his throne, or as we sit here below on seats arranged for us. God being a pure spirit, has neither hands nor feet, and, consequently, has neither right nor left. But as, according to usages, received among us, the greatest honour is supposed to be paid to the person who is placed on the right, the Scriptures, to accommodate themselves to our weak understandings, make use of the expression "sitting on the right hand of God", to point out, or make known to us, that Jesus Christ, as God, is the same in power, glory, and majesty, with His Father; and that as Man, He possesses a glory peculiar to Himself alone, and which cannot belong to any other created being; that He is superior to all the other created intelligences of Heaven, far above the Angels and saints, invested with dignity, power, and glory, as Man, to which the whole hierarchy of Heaven cannot lay claim; and this because His human nature is inseparably united to His divinity. He is said

to be sitting, in order that we may understand that He is fixed for ever on the immovable throne of His empire, enjoying eternal repose after His labours.

Q. What did Christ promise to His Apostles before He ascended into heaven?

A. That He would send “the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, to teach them all things, and to abide with them for ever” (*John*, xiv. 16).

11. Jesus Christ, before quitting this world to return to His Father, told His Apostles and disciples of His intention of leaving them; and finding that this announcement filled them with bitter sorrow and grief, He consoled them by saying, that after His departure He would not leave them orphans, but would send down the Holy Ghost to strengthen and comfort them. The wonderful effects that the Holy Spirit would produce on them He also described. He promised them that this other Comforter would “teach them all things”, would instruct them in all truth, and would clothe them with strength from on high: “But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you (*John*, xiv.). But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father, He shall give testimony of Me: and you shall give testimony, because you are with Me from the beginning” (*John*, xv. 26). In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke thus relates Christ’s promise of sending the Holy Ghost: “But you shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the uttermost parts of the earth” (*Acts*, i. 7). That promise Jesus Christ

fulfilled after His ascension into heaven. He was not long in possession of His Father's throne, when the expected Comforter descended upon the Apostles.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE FOOTPRINTS OF CHRIST ON MOUNT OLIVET.

* Mount Olivet is the highest mountain about Jerusalem, and is situated on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. From the city, which stood on hills, Mount Olivet appeared low, but very high to those who came from Jericho. It is distant about a mile from Jerusalem, from which it is separated by the brook Kedron and the valley of Josaphat. It ranges from north to south, and exhibits three summits, from which one enjoys a full view of the city, its mosque, streets, and walls. It was from the centre summit that Christ ascended into Heaven, and we are told, by several Fathers and by modern travellers, that the prints of His feet remain in the hard rock of the place where He last stood on earth, and have ever been devoutly visited by pious pilgrims, at least since the fourth century. At present there remains only the print of the left foot, the Turks having, about the middle of the seventeenth century, taken away that part of the rock on which was impressed the mark of the right foot, and placed it with great veneration in their mosque. The sacred relic, still existing, has lately been seen by many travellers. The heel is towards the south, and the toes towards the north. So in ascending to Heaven, as well as on the cross, Jesus Christ was looking towards Europe—that delightful part of the world which remained most faithful to Him, and most attached to the Holy See. Saint Paulinus and Sulpicius Severus tell us that the spot on which Christ left the prints of His feet never could be covered with any pavement; also that no violence had been able to efface them. This will appear the more wonderful, as the Roman army, when Titus besieged the city, was encamped on Mount Olivet. Eusebius mentions that the Empress Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, built a church upon the very spot from which Christ ascended.

A PILGRIM VISITING THE HOLY PLACES.

† In those times, when Catholics, distinguished for birth

and fortune, deemed it their duty to testify their love for Jesus Christ, by visiting those sacred spots where the great mysteries of our redemption had taken place, a young nobleman, as we are told by St. Bernard of Sienna, undertook this happy journey. He first visited Nazareth, and at the sight of this little village, where the Blessed Virgin lived for many years, and where the Angel appeared telling her that she was to conceive and bring forth a son, and that He should be called Jesus, he experienced the most lively sentiments of gratitude and love. When at Bethlehem, the grotto where Christ was born was pointed out to him, he contemplated with faith the poor and lowly dwelling, and tears of tender pity flowed copiously from his eyes. He then visited in succession all those places which had been marked by some incident in our Saviour's life. He forgot not the Jordan, where St. John baptized Christ, nor the desert, where He fasted so long, and where He was tempted by the devil. In the garden of Gethsemani he experienced an unusual glow of fervent love, and imagined that he heard the sighs and tender complaints of his dear Lord, and thought that he beheld the sweat of blood which cast Him into His agony, and then, as he could not shed his blood for that loving Lord, he watered the ground with his tears. In this manner he performed all the stations of Christ's passion. In ascending Mount Calvary, he imagined he was following, step by step, our Saviour, bearing His cross. When he gained the summit of the hill, so great was his grief that he had almost fainted. It is here, he said, that my Jesus had been crucified; it is here that His hands and feet had been pierced with rough nails; here it is that the whole human race had been redeemed. From Calvary he proceeded to the Sepulchre, and from the Sepulchre to the spot where Jesus had left the print of His feet when He ascended into heaven. At the view of the print of His footsteps, he fell on his knees, kissed the sacred marks, and then raising his hands and eyes towards heaven, said aloud: "O Jesus! O love of my heart! where do you wish that I should now go? I have visited all those places where Thou hast been pleased to dwell during Thy mortal life, and which have been the scene of Thy sufferings. I have followed Thee to Calvary, I have accompanied Thee to the Sepulchre, and now, O Lord! I am on the very spot from which Thou didst ascend into Heaven. Can I follow Thee, O Lord, farther? O Jesus! let it be mine to follow Thee to heaven!" At these words he inclined his head, his heart ceased to beat, he expired, and on that heart were impressed the words, *Jesus, my love.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Did Christ often appear to His Apostles after His resurrection?
2. What did our Lord say to Thomas when He again appeared to the Apostles?
3. During forty days on earth, did Christ instruct His Apostles?
4. Describe the circumstances of Christ's Ascension.
5. What are Bossuet's remarks on the Ascension?
6. What happened to the disciples when Christ ascended?
7. Is Jesus Christ any longer on earth?
8. What place does Christ hold in Heaven?
9. What advantages flow to us from the Ascension of Christ?
10. What is the meaning of the expression, "Sitting at the right hand of God"?
11. What promise did Jesus make to His Apostles before His ascension?

PRACTICE.

1. Often think that this world is only a place of pilgrimage and exile, that Heaven is our true country, and that Jesus Christ has ascended there to prepare a place for us.
2. In your many trials and difficulties reflect that pain and labour will soon end, and that your reward in Heaven, if you serve God here, will be eternal.
3. From time to time during the day think of heaven, and all your labours will appear light.

PRAYER.

We return Thee thanks, Lord, for the instruction we have received. The consoling truth that Thou hast ascended into heaven has been explained to us. Thou hast ascended to heaven to prepare a place for us in that glorious mansion. Thou art every day inviting us to enter on the road that leads to it. How comes it, dear Lord, that we are deaf to Thy sweet calls? Oh, may heaven be always the subject of our thoughts in this world, that we may enjoy its glories in the world to come. Amen

CHAPTER XXX.

ON THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST ON THE
APOSTLES, AND ON THE NEW LAW.

Q. On what day, and after what manner, did the Holy Ghost descend on the Apostles?

A. On Whit Sunday the Holy Ghost "descended in the form of tongues of fire, and sat upon every one of them" (*Acts*, ii. 2).

1. After the ascension into Heaven of our Blessed Lord, the Apostles withdrew together into a house at Jerusalem, which is said to have been that of Mary, the mother of John Mark, the disciple of our Lord, and was situated on Mount Sion. Here, in company with the Blessed Virgin and the disciples of Jesus, they awaited the coming of the Holy Ghost in continued prayer, as Christ had commanded them. St. Luke says they retired into an "upper room", that is, the highest room in the house. The roofs of the houses in Palestine being flat, the highest room was often the most decent, and the largest as well as the most retired. In this "upper room" St. Peter proposed the election, by lots, of an Apostle to fill the place of the apostate Judas. Two were immediately named in preference to all others, Matthias and Barsabas, or Joseph, surnamed the Just. Devoutly praying to God that He would be pleased to manifest His will to them, the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was at once adopted into their college, and thus their number was again completed. The sacred assembly was composed of about one hundred and twenty in number, all actuated with the same spirit, and removed from the tumult and dissipation of the world,

unanimously persevering in prayer, and anxiously awaiting the coming of the Divine Spirit promised by their heavenly Master. From the example of the Apostles we should learn to devote a part of our time, as much as circumstances will permit, to prayer and retirement. There are many who cannot, from their peculiar state of life, spend much time in meditation, but there is not one who cannot, from time to time, in the midst of his occupations, raise his heart to God, keep himself in His presence, and occasionally reflect on some of the great truths of eternity. This is a kind of retreat which can be practised in any state of life, and without which a soul can never receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

2. Whilst the Apostles and the disciples were thus offering up together their prayers in the "upper room", they heard, on the tenth day of their retirement, called the day of Pentecost, about the third hour of the day—that is, about nine o'clock—a great noise, as it were the "rushing of a mighty wind", coming from Heaven, and which filled the whole house where they were assembled together; and at the same time there appeared "cloven tongues, as it were of fire, which sat upon every one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost" (*Acts*, ii. 2). Observe, dear children, that the Holy Ghost descended on a sudden upon the Apostles, in order to teach us that the Lord visits our souls when it pleases Him, and so that we ought always be ready to receive Him. "The wind came down directly from heaven, because the inspiration of the Holy Ghost", as Alban Butler remarks, "came not from earth, but from on high. The wind is a figure of the breathing of divine grace upon our souls, to give and preserve in them the spiritual life of grace. The vehemence of this wind indicates the fervour with which we should practise all our duties—the Holy Ghost being

an enemy to all lukewarmness and sluggishness in the practice of virtue".

3. He descends in the form of fire, because fire cleanses, lights up, enkindles, mounts up on high, unites itself to, and transforms into itself, everything which it subdues, and because similar effects are produced in our souls by His grace, which consumes the rust of our sins and imperfections, and gives a great knowledge of the mysteries of Faith and the maxims of the Gospel. By His gifts and graces, He so unites the soul to Himself that, by the union of perfect love, the soul becometh one spirit with Him. The fire appeared in the shape of "tongues" rather than in that of hearts, to show that these gifts were bestowed on the Apostles not only in order that they might love God themselves, but also that they should communicate by their tongues the fire of His love to others. These "tongues" in particular signified the gift of tongues, by which the Apostles made themselves intelligible to men of all nations, with whom they had occasion to treat; and the cleft in the "tongues" pointed out the diversity of languages. The festival celebrated by the Church every year, in commemoration of the descent of the Holy Ghost, is called the Feast of Pentecost. The word pentecost means fiftieth, and the feast is so called, because it is celebrated on the fiftieth day after Easter.

Q. What does the Scripture say of those who received the Holy Ghost?

A. "They were all filled with the Holy Ghost; and they began to speak, in divers tongues, the wonderful works of God" (*Acts*, ii.).

4. No sooner had the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles, than they were changed into quite other men. Before they received the Holy Ghost they were

weak, timid, cowardly, and hid themselves through fear of the Jews—the slightest danger affrighted them, the least obstacle confounded them. At the voice of a servant maid, poor St. Peter denied his Master, and swore he knew Him not. And so fearful were the others, that, when their Lord was seized in the garden, they ran away, and abandoned Him in the hands of His enemies. During His passion, not one of them was there to stand up for His defence; and whilst He was extended on the cross, St. John alone had the courage to stand at the foot of that cross. But now, when the Holy Ghost shed His beams upon them, they are inflamed with divine love, zeal, and courage. From timid sheep, they become like so many courageous lions, breathing forth flames of charity. Now they fear no dangers, they apprehend no evil, they dread no torments, they regard no threats. They go forth from the upper room, and preach Jesus Christ crucified “in divers tongues”. A great number of Jews, “devout men out of every nation under heaven”, were then assembled together at Jerusalem, to celebrate the festiyal of the Jewish Pentecost; and when this extraordinary event became public, they ran in crowds to the place where the Apostles were preaching, to make themselves certain of the truth of the report. And they were all amazed at hearing them speak the languages of different countries; and they wondered, saying: “Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how have we heard every man our own tongue wherein we were born?”

5. The Apostles addressed themselves not only to the natives of Palestine, but to the Romans, Greeks, Assyrians, Egyptians, Persians, Medes, Arabians, and to men of every country and tongue. They preach to them “the wonderful works of God”, that Christ crucified was the long-promised Messiah, and that

He arose from the dead. And they preached with such energy and force, with such propriety and facility, in the various tongues of those collected around them, that one would think they had spent their whole lives in the study of those languages : "And they were all astonished, and wondered, saying one to another : what meaneth this ?" But others tried to turn into derision what was passing around, and said : "These men are full of new wine". St. Peter, seizing the moment, rose up with the eleven to refute the calumny. In a pathetic discourse, he informed those collected around, that what they saw and wondered at was not the effect of wine, but of the Holy Spirit, which God had promised, by His prophet Joel, to pour out upon His people. He then spoke of the miracles, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ ; that Christ, whom they, "by the hands of wicked men", had crucified and slain, who arose on the third day following, and who had ascended into Heaven, was no other than the Son of God ; that they were to adore no longer any other God but Him : and the arguments by which he advanced this great doctrine were so solid and just, that one might have imagined that the study of the Scriptures had been the employment of his life, and that his whole time had been hitherto given to the cultivation of eloquence.

6. Previous to the descent of the Holy Ghost the Apostles were ignorant, uninformed, full of the prejudices of their nation—their ideas were altogether worldly. Christ had been for three years continually instructing them ; sometimes He spoke to them in parables, at other times He addressed them in plain, clear language ; but His parables were to them as so many riddles, and His more open instructions they interpreted in a wrong sense. They scarcely knew for what end He came on earth ; they did not yet

even understand that the world was redeemed by His blood. Even on the day of His Ascension, they were figuring to themselves the deliverance of their country from the yoke of the Romans, and they were expecting to see their Master seated, like one of the old Jewish kings, on the temporal throne of David. Such was their ignorance, such were their ideas; but now, when the “tongues of fire” descended on them, error, ignorance, preconceived opinions, worldly notions, earthly desires, were at once banished, and, in accordance with the promise of Christ, they were instructed, not in some truths, but in every truth. Their minds underwent a change as instantaneous as that produced by a glare of light bursting suddenly on darkness. Just a moment before, and they were buried in the darkness of ignorance; and now they are surrounded with the light of the most profound knowledge. Just a moment since, and the most simple truths they could not conceive, the plainest doctrine they could not understand; but now they are so wonderfully illumined from above, that they understand the highest mysteries; and such is the eloquence of their tongues, that they are able to convince the greatest orators and confound the most learned philosophers. Just a moment since, and they were poor, ignorant disciples; and now they are become the teachers of the whole world.

Q. Did the Apostles convert many persons?

A. Yes; the Apostles converted a great many, both Jews and Gentiles.

7. St. Peter, in his first sermon, on the very day of the descent of the Holy Ghost, converted three thousand Jews. In a few days after, as he and St. John were going, about the ninth hour, to perform their devotions in the Temple, they found, on enter-

ing the gate, which was called the Beautiful, a cripple from his mother's womb, lying and unable to move without help. The poor man fixed his eyes upon the Apostles, as if he expected an alms. St Peter said to him: "Silver and gold I have none, but what I have I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk" (*Acts*, i. 8). At the same time, he took a hold of his right hand, and lifted him up. At that very instant the man leaped upon his feet, stood firm upon his legs, and walked joyfully with the Apostles into the Temple, giving thanks to God for the favour he had received by their means. Struck with wonder and amazement to see the man cured at once, the people cast their eyes upon the two Apostles, which St. Peter observing, told them that it was not by their own power, but through the power of Jesus Christ, whom they delivered up to be crucified, that the man was made to walk. Taking occasion from this miracle, he exhorted them to penance—he preached to them Christ crucified, and five thousand Jews became Christians.

8. The rest of the Apostles, fired with zeal similar to that of St. Peter, after having preached in the neighbouring cities and towns of Jerusalem, went forth through the whole world to announce the doctrine of Christ to every nation, according to the orders which they had received from their Divine Master: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (*Matt.*, xxviii. 19, 20). They extended themselves over the globe—each of them, like the Angel mentioned in the Apocalypse, flying with his gospel through the air—as the Spirit guides them, preaching Christ crucified wherever

they went, and converting whole nations to the doctrine of our Redeemer.*

Q. Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost?

A. To sanctify His Church, to comfort His Apostles, and to enable them to preach the Gospel, or the New Law.

9. As the Son of God came down upon earth to pay our ransom, and to establish His Church; in like manner, the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles to sanctify and govern that Church. It is true, the Holy Ghost does not at present descend visibly on the faithful in the form of fiery tongues, nor does He always bestow on them the extraordinary and miraculous gifts which He conferred on the Apostles—those being no longer so necessary as they were in the infancy of the Church. However, He still continues to this very day to descend really, though invisibly, into the souls of those who give themselves up to His divine inspirations, and are properly disposed, like the disciples, for receiving the impressions of His grace. This divine Guest is no less promised to us than to the first disciples. Christ gave Him to abide with and “sanctify His Church” and all its true members for ever. The sacred fountain opened at Pentecost on the Apostles still continues to flow, and will continue to flow every day, sanctifying the Church to the end of time. “I will ask the Father”, said our Lord, “and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for ever” (*St. John*, xiv. 16).

10. “To comfort His Apostles” was another reason why Christ sent down the Holy Ghost. Before He left His dear disciples to return to His Father, He lovingly assured them, that He would not leave them destitute, as orphans without a father;

but that He would send His Holy Spirit to supply His place, as the Comforter, to be always with them, sweetening their crosses and sufferings, and giving them strength and vigour to discharge their many and severe duties : " I will not leave you orphans ", but will give you another Comforter (*John*, xiv. 18). And when the Holy Spirit descended on them, He purified and inflamed their hearts ; He gave them spiritual life and strength, and filled the inmost corners of their hearts with His sweetest heavenly joy, and with the unction of His holy consolation and love.

11. " To enable them to preach the Gospel or the New Law ", and to qualify them in every respect for the discharge of the sacred functions of their ministry, was the other principal end of the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. The Apostles were originally men without power, wealth, or learning ; men devoid of all influence or credit with the world, living in retirement and obscurity—the greater number of them poor ignorant fishermen, when they were called by Jesus Christ. Even after their vocation to the Apostleship, though they enjoyed the happiness of being instructed in the school of virtue by Jesus Christ Himself, they were still subject to many little motions of secret spiritual passions, even of envy and ambition. They were subject to a thousand weaknesses and habitual imperfections. For instance, we find the two sons of Zebedee ambitious, one to sit on the right hand, and the other on the left of Jesus Christ. We find frequent disputes for precedence among the disciples, which they renewed on the very eve of His crucifixion. After His resurrection, though He frequently appeared to them to cheer their drooping spirits, yet they were so dull and slow of apprehension, that all His discourses were to them so many riddles. Even after His ascension, they

were so timorous and cowardly, that they were afraid to appear in public, but remained shut up in the "upper room" at Jerusalem through fear of the Jews.

12. But what a change when the Holy Ghost descended upon them! As soon as He shed His beams upon them they became "enabled to preach the Gospel"; for, like so many courageous lions, they issued forth, animated with zeal and charity. No obstacle, no power, no force, could stop their progress. Death, in its most terrifying shape, was not able to deter them from the sacred functions of their ministry. The wondering world is roused by the thunder of their voices. Their words are like so many fiery darts, that are shot from hearts inflamed with the love of God. The most populous and renowned cities—Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, even Rome itself, the mistress of the world—hear, with rapture and amazement the eloquence of the ignorant fishermen. As the walls of Jericho fell to the ground at the sound of the trumpet of Josue; so, too, fell the temples of the heathen gods at the sound of the Apostles. Unconscious and regardless of danger, they preached the Gospel of Christ in defiance of all the powers of the world. The land of Judea is too confined for the ardour and extent of their zeal; they pass from city to city, from province to province, from kingdom to kingdom; they went forth to the extremities of the earth, attacking abuses the most ancient and deeply rooted. They tear from the most barbarous tribes the idols which their ancestors had for ages adored; and they overturn altars long consecrated to paganism.

13. The obstacles that surround them they fling aside, and preach Jesus crucified to the most polished nations—to those that gloried in their learning and their eloquence, their philosophy and their wisdom. The whole world conspires against them; but they

are stronger than the world. The cross and the gibbet are placed before them, to compel them to be silent, and they reply they cannot but announce what things they have heard and seen. Threats and menaces avail little against those men filled with the spirit of the Holy Ghost; and their answer invariably is, that "they must obey God sooner than man". In short, they made such a rapid progress, and preached the Gospel of Jesus with such wonderful success, that "their sound went into the whole earth", as the Scripture says, and their words reached the remotest corners of the known world. It was thus, dear children, that the Gospel was preached, and the Church of Christ originally planted upon the ruins of paganism and the destruction of the Jewish synagogue.

14. Thus was the "New Law" promulgated, and the foundation of our holy religion laid, more than eighteen hundred years ago, and that not by men of immoral lives, nor by the force of arms, nor by the severity of cruel laws, nor by means of the wealth of the world, but by the labours and preachings of Christ's own Apostles, "enabled" by the Holy Ghost, who visibly descended on them for that purpose. In defence of the faith preached by them, they laid down their lives. St. Peter was crucified at Rome, with his head down; his great respect for his Master prompted him to request that he should be crucified in a different manner from that in which Jesus died. St. Paul, who had been specially appointed the Apostle of the Gentiles, was beheaded also in Rome, and on the very same day. St. Andrew was crucified in Patras in Greece. St. James the Greater was beheaded in Jerusalem; St. James the Less was cast down from the battlements of the Temple. St. Simon was crucified in Persia. That the others suffered, and died too, for the Gospel, we learn from tradition.

St. John the Evangelist, after having been cast into a cauldron of boiling oil without being injured, was banished to the isle of Patmos, where he wrote the *Apocalypse*. Two years after he returned to Ephesus, and died at the age of ninety.

SCRIPTURAL ILLUSTRATION.

THE PUNISHMENT OF SIMON THE MAGICIAN.

* Simon the Magician was a native of Gitton, and had acquired a great reputation in the city of Samaria, by his sorceries and magical practices. His followers called him *the great power of God*. But when St. Peter and St. John arrived at Samaria, to confirm, by the imposition of hands, those newly baptized and converted by the preachings and miracles of Philip the deacon, he professed his belief in Jesus Christ, and received baptism. With the grace of the sacrament there were conferred at that time, by the imposition of hands, certain external gifts of the miraculous powers. Simon seeing these communicated to the laity by the imposition of the hands of the Apostles, was desirous to be vested with the same power as the Apostles, that the miracles which he hoped to work might redound to his own glory. With this intention he offered them money, saying "Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I shall lay my hands he may receive the Holy Ghost". But St. Peter said to him : "Keep thy money to thyself to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Do penance for this thy wickedness, and pray to God, if perhaps this thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee". But far from doing penance, he gave himself up anew to magical practices, and to the most impious and execrable superstitions, and became the secret enemy of the Apostles. After having infected Samaria with the most extravagant errors, he came to Rome, and wishing to persuade the emperor Nero that he was God, promised to fly in the air, and ascend to Heaven. The people of Rome came out to witness the extraordinary spectacle, and in their presence he really raised himself in the air by his magical power. St. Peter and St. Paul, seeing the delusion, betook themselves to prayer, and they had no sooner prayed

than the impostor fell to the ground, was bruised, broke his leg, and died a few days after in rage and confusion. From Simon Magus is derived the word *Simony*—that is, the buying and selling of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. How were the Apostles engaged when they received the Holy Ghost?
2. In what way did the Holy Ghost descend upon the Apostles?
3. What do the fire and tongues signify?
4. What effects were produced on the Apostles by the descent of the Holy Ghost?
5. Did the Apostles speak many languages? What was the subject of St. Peter's Sermon?
6. What were the Apostles before, and what after, the descent of the Holy Ghost?
7. How many of the Jews were converted by St. Peter's discourses?
8. Were the rest of the Apostles as zealous and successful as St. Peter?
9. What was one of the ends of the descent of the Holy Ghost?
10. Mention another reason why the Holy Ghost descended.
11. Were the Apostles, before the descent of the Holy Ghost, intelligent and brave?
12. Describe the effects of the Apostles' zeal.
13. How did the Apostles surmount the many obstacles in their career?
14. After preaching the Gospel, how did the Apostles end their lives?

PRACTICE.

1. In imitation of the Apostles, let us occasionally retire from the distracting cares of the world, that we may prepare our souls for the reception of the graces of the Holy Ghost.
2. Let us often pray to this Divine Spirit, that He may enable us to undertake courageously the exercises of a holy life, and practise the virtues inculcated by the Gospel.
3. When once engaged in the service of God, let neither threats, nor punishments, nor worldly respect, ever turn us aside from it.

PRAYER.

O Holy Spirit! descend this day into my heart, and fill it with Thy gifts and graces. It is cold and lukewarm, but if Thou visitest it, it shall become a new heart, enlightened, pure, chaste, patient, and filled with heavenly love. Take from me the love of the things of the world, and let my affections rest on those of heaven. Grant me zeal in the discharge of my duties, that everything I do and say may contribute to the glory of Thy holy name. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXI.

OF THE NEW AND THE OLD LAW, AND THE SIGN OF
THE CROSS.

Q. What do you mean by the New Law?

A. The Law which Christ established on earth.

1. The “New Law” is that law of grace and love which Christ came on earth to preach and establish. It is called the law of the Gospel, because the precepts, duties, observances, and practices of the New Law are to be found in the Gospel. The “New Law” is a spiritual law, engraved not on tables of stone, but on the hearts of men by the Holy Ghost, and propagated through all the nations of the earth. It was miraculous, not only in the mysterious manner of its promulgation, but also in the wonderful manner of its propagation. Christ foretold, when all appearances were against Him, that the New Law should soon be spread to the furthest extremity of the earth. He compared the preaching of the Gospel to a grain of mustard seed, which, though being the least of all seeds, grows to such a height as to surpass all other shrubs (*Matt.*, xiii, 32).

2. The instruments chosen by Him for this great design of converting the world were such as to render the work a subject of astonishment. As we have already seen, men of low condition and natural cowardice—and whom He compares to sheep in the midst of wolves—were by Him endowed with an intrepidity, which no torments could subdue or no death intimidate. Men who, by the obscurity of their birth, and want of letters and education, were accustomed to tremble before men in power, He commands to preach the most sublime and unheard-of mysteries before the kings of the earth. And men who were ignorant of the first rudiments of learning, and little versed even in the first knowledge of religion, He endued with a wisdom which all their enemies could not contradict (*Matt.*, x. 18). They preached a God made man, crucified by His own people, and rejected by the whole nation, and boasted of no other knowledge than that of their crucified Master; yet, they refuted, triumphed over, and reduced to silence the doctors of the Jewish law, and the orators and philosophers of the Gentiles. The persecutions raised against the disciples of Christ, served only to hasten the great work. Philip the deacon, being forced to quit Jerusalem, preached with surprising success in Samaria. The moment the Jews rejected the Gospel, by imprisoning some of its teachers and stoning St. Stephen, the first martyr, the Apostles then dispersed over the whole earth, to instruct and baptize all nations.

Q. What country among the Gentiles was first called to the faith?

A. The country of Chaldea.

3. Tradition hands down to us that the Chaldean nation was the first of all the Gentiles to embrace the New Law; for three of its kings, learned in the

religion and science of the *Magi*, were miraculously conducted to the crib of our Redeemer. When the three kings returned to their native country of Chaldea, they announced the joyful tidings of the birth of the Messiah, so that the country was prepared to receive the doctrine of hope and salvation, when the Apostles, aided by the Holy Ghost, divided among them the empire of the world, and assigned to each a share of its kingdoms for the principal theatre of his labours. It is told that St. Thomas and St. Bartholomew, before they preached in the many countries of the East converted by them, had already passed through Chaldea, and by their discourses had brought over many to the law of Christ.

4. The other Apostles, having within the space of twelve years enlightened the neighbouring nations, then carried the light of faith to distant parts. St. John preached in Asia Minor, St. Andrew in Scythia, St. Philip in Upper Asia, St. Matthew in Persia, St. Simeon in Mesopotamia, St. Jude in Arabia, St. Matthias in Ethiopia. St. Paul, a chosen vessel of divine grace, was singularly destined to carry the name of Christ before kings and nations and the children of Israel. He entered the provinces of Asia—Pisidia, Pamphylia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Galatia, and Mysia—converting thousands as he passed, to the Christian religion. He then cast his eyes on Greece, and by his zealous labours, flourishing churches rose in the great towns of Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Athens, and Ephesus. From Greece he stretched his course to Rome, and carried the knowledge of Jesus Christ into the apartments of Nero's palace. The Gospel was preached with such success, that in little more than one hundred years after Christ's death, Tertullian tells the Romans : “ We are but of yesterday, and we have overspread your empire. Your cities, your islands, your forts, towns, and as-

semblies—your very armies, wards, companies, tribes, palace, senate, and forum, swarm with Christians. We have left nothing but temples to yourselves". And in his book against the Jews, he says that "territories of the Britons, which were inaccessible to the Romans, were subject to Christ".

Q. What do you mean by the Old Law ?

A. The Law given to the Jews.

5. Almighty God, immediately after the sin of our first parents, Adam and Eve, entered into a most merciful covenant with Adam, by which He admitted him to repentance and pardon, through the merits of a Redeemer to come, of whose coming He then gave him the most solemn promise.* God then instituted a religion, by which He was pleased to appoint that Adam and Eve, with their descendants, should worship and honour Him; and on that condition He engaged to show them mercy, and to conduct them to eternal salvation. This is called the Patriarchal religion, which consisted in the belief of certain principal revealed truths, and chiefly of that of eternal happiness, for which man was created; and also of certain means by which he was to attain to that end; but particularly in the belief of a Redeemer to come, through whom alone he could arrive at that happiness. The means of salvation revealed to Adam consisted in repentance, and in certain sacrifices, such as the sacrifice of the first fruits of the earth, and the bloody sacrifice of beasts—figures of Christ's bloody Sacrifice on the Cross, and of the great Sacrifice of the Eucharist in the New Law.

6. This first state of religion was very imperfect, exceedingly confined, and the knowledge which it furnished of supernatural things very weak. How-

* See chapter xviii., paragraph 1.

ever, in it the light of faith was extended by degrees ; for new revelations were made to several Patriarchs, which explained more fully the qualities of the Messiah, and the great end of His coming. The true Patriarchal religion was maintained down from Noah, principally through the descendants of Sem—to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. To Abraham God revealed the promise of a Messiah more clearly than He had before, telling him, that He should be born of his seed by Isaac, and that in Him all nations should be blessed. That the posterity of Abraham may be recognized as His chosen people, and distinguished from the rest of mankind, He gave them as a mark the law of circumcision. To this chosen people, who were the descendants of Abraham, and become a great nation, divided into twelve tribes, founded by the twelve families of the sons of Jacob, God gave, by the ministry of Moses, a written law. This law, given four hundred years after the vocation of Abraham, is called the written covenant, or the "Old Law". It was a much fuller and more complete system of religion than that of the Patriarchs. It consisted of the "Ten Commandments", engraved on two tables of stone, which were a confirmation of what was commanded by the law of nature ; and with these ten precepts were added the laws of the state or republic. It also contained a great number of ceremonial precepts of sacrifices, sacraments, and ritual observances—all figures of the promised Redeemer and His holy law, of whom it had many various and distinct prophecies.

7. The "Old Law", though fitted by the wisdom of divine Providence to the circumstances of the people and to the state of things for which it was appointed, was in many ways imperfect. In the first place, because it was only given as "a pedagogue" to instruct men in the knowledge of their spiritual

interests, and to prepare them for the graces of the New Law, its most sacred rites and sacrifices were merely shadows, types, and figures of the Law. Again, the ritual precepts and observances in the Old Law were so many as to be a heavy burden, and an occasion of frequent transgressions of it, though they were adapted to restrain a gross people from the contagion of idolatry. The Jewish sacraments and rites had no force or virtue but what they derived from an actual faith in a Redeemer to come, and were of themselves "weak and needy elements". Again, the "Old Law" was a law of fear and servitude, suited to the carnal state of the Jews; for though it imposed a commandment of the love of God, yet it chiefly furnished motives of fear and dread in deterring men from sin. The "Old Law" was promulgated in thunder and lightning, with other signs of terror, with which the Jews were so struck as to pray that God might not speak to them lest they should die—not being able to hear His voice or stand in His presence. It was not given by God in person, but by an angel who spoke in His name; and was delivered to Moses, materially engraved on tables of stone. As it was a dispensation only for a time, and as it was a fore-runner of another law, it should give place to the Gospel, or the New Law.

Q. How do you call the followers of the New Law?

A. Christians.

8. The Apostles having heard of the great progress of the Gospel in Antioch, sent thither St. Barnabas, who witnessed with delight the great wonders effected in that city by the grace of the Holy Ghost. Some time afterwards he repaired to Tarsus to seek out St. Paul, and both sailed to Antioch, where they re-

mained two years preaching the Gospel and leading many into the fold of Christ. In this city it was that the disciples of Jesus received, for the first time, about ten years after His ascension, the name of "Christians". From that time until now all who have believed in Christ, and professed His doctrine, have been called "Christians" or followers of Christ. The word Christian is derived from the Greek word *Xριστος*, anointed, the name by which our Redeemer is called. It also expresses an idea which should never be lost sight of by one who remembers the lustre of His origin and the sublimity of His vocation. "All the descendants of the first man", says the learned Phillips, "are, on account of their descent, men themselves; so, too, should all men spiritually descended from the new Adam become Christians, that is, members of His body and of His Church. They should be Christians not only as followers of His doctrine, but also as His brethren. As the Word clothed Himself with our humanity, they ought to clothe themselves with His divinity; they ought to be anointed as He, crowned as He, kings as He. In this glorious meaning of the word, there are not, it is true, many who can lay claim to the title of Christians. But is not the Church an assembly of those who are called to be incorporated with Jesus Christ? Is it not her mission to render those who enter her fold so many true, living members of her Divine Spouse? Is she not a mother who receives into her bosom all those who consecrate themselves to Jesus Christ, who forms them to her own likeness and to that of Jesus Christ, and brings them forth anew as citizens of heaven".*

Q. How are we known to be Christians?

A. By being baptized, by professing the doctrine of Christ, and by the sign of the Cross.

9. In order, dear children, to be “known as Christians”, we must be baptized ; for, if we have not received the sacrament of Baptism, we cannot belong to Christ, as being under the dominion of Satan, on account of the stain of Original Sin, in which we have been conceived and born. Baptism alone can cleanse us from that stain, and impress on us the grand character of Christians, or children of Christ. Without “being baptized”, we cannot become members of the Christian fold ; for the sacrament of Baptism it is that opens to us the gate of the Church, introduces us into the fold of Christ, and confers on us the privileges of His disciples. We are “known to be Christians”, too, “by professing the doctrine of Christ”—that is, by firmly believing all the truths that He has made known to His Church ; for if, after having been baptized, we refuse to believe any one of the truths of Faith, we at once forfeit all right to the title of “Christian”. Another mark which points us out as Christians is making “the sign of the Cross”. There is scarcely a society or community that has not a certain sign or mark by which its members can be recognised. The distinctive mark of every Christian is “the sign of the Cross”, so much so that in whatever part of the world you see a person making that sign, you can with certainty pronounce him a Christian.

10. The practice of making “the sign of the Cross” has come down to us from the days of the Apostles. From the very infancy of the Church, the use of “the sign of the Cross” has always been most sacred, and most frequent in all religious practices, and in almost every action. It is from the Church that we receive that practice, and every age of the Church testifies to its being used at all times by the faithful. The primitive Christians consecrated themselves to God, and implored His blessing in every

action, by forming on their foreheads, breast, or body, the holy "sign of the Cross". Tertullian, the oldest among the Latin Doctors, mentions it in the following words :—" At every step when we walk, go out of doors or come in ; when we put any garment or our shoes on ; when we wash ourselves, go to table, light a lamp or fire, go to bed, or sit down, we sign our foreheads with the sign of the cross". And what more appropriate sign, dear children, can be used by Christians, who acknowledge that it is by the cross that Jesus Christ has delivered them from the power of the devil, and has obtained for them all the graces necessary for salvation ? Never blush, then, at this redeeming sign, which is the distinctive mark of your nobility, your dignity, and your true liberty ; but always make it on your forehead, breast, and shoulders, with pleasure, satisfaction, and true Christian pride.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ORIENTAL CHRISTIANS.

* The Christians of the East impressed with red hot iron the sign of the cross on the foreheads of children. This practice was introduced in order that their children should not be taken away by the Mahometans to be made slaves, and brought up in the religion of Mahomet ; for so hateful was the sign of the cross to them, that a child or slave with it was never carried away into slavery.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

† The holy Fathers relate many instances of miraculous cures effected by the sign of the cross. St. Augustin tells us that Innocentia, a woman of Carthage, was healed of an ulcer in her breast by the sign of the cross formed upon it. St. Gregory of Nyssa, in his Life of his sister, St. Macrina, tells us that "she made the sign of the cross on her eyes, mouth, and heart. She hung about her neck an iron ring, in which was encased a particle of the true tree of life".

He also relates that when she was reduced to extremity by sickness, she was miraculously restored to health by the sign of the cross, formed by her mother, at her request, upon her breast. Victor, the learned and pious Bishop of Vitis, tells us that St. Eugenius of Carthage by it restored sight to a blind man named Felix. It was so frequently confirmed by miracles, that St. Chrysostom calls the sign of the cross "a defence against all evil, and a medicine against all sickness". A violent fever had brought to the point of death two young persons, sons of Benedict and his wife named Lope. All natural remedies having proved of no avail, they entreated a holy bishop to come and see them. When he entered the room in which they lay, he made the sign of the cross over them, and at that very moment they were cured from the violent fever.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What is the nature of the New Law, and how was it propagated ?
2. Whom did God select to preach the New Law ?
3. What country among the Gentiles was first called to the faith ?
4. In what other countries did the Apostles preach the Gospel ?
5. What was the nature of the Patriarchal religion ?
6. For what reasons was the Old Law imperfect ?
7. When did the followers of Christ receive the name of Christians ?
8. By what marks can we be recognized as Christians ?
9. Has the sign of the cross been used from the earliest times ?

PRACTICE.

1. Never cease thanking God for having brought you up in the Christian religion.
2. Often assist at catechetical instructions, that you may know, and be able to put into practice, the duties which your character as a Christian demands from you.
3. Frequently make use of the sign of the cross, and never be influenced by human respect in omitting that salutary and pious practice.

PRAYER.

O adorable God! we thank Thee for Thy great mercy in distinguishing us from pagans and idolators, and for having enlightened us with the truths of Christianity. Grant, we beseech Thee, that our lives may never belie our belief; but that, during the course of our mortal pilgrimage, we may so observe the commands which Thy law imposes, as to merit hereafter that eternal happiness which is promised to those who fulfil Thy law. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ON THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Q. How is the sign of the Cross made?

A. By putting the right hand to the forehead, then on the breast, then on the left and right shoulders, saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen".

1. There are two ways in which "the sign of the Cross is made". The first and usual way in which we make it is, in the first place, to raise the right hand extended or open to the forehead, saying at the same time: "In the name of the Father"; then to place it on the breast, saying: "and of the Son"; and again to place it on the left, and immediately after on the right shoulder, saying: "and of the Holy Ghost". "Amen" is added in joining the hands before the breast. The second way of making "the sign of the Cross" is, to form with the thumb a little cross on the forehead, on the mouth, and on the breast, which means that we wish to consecrate to God our thoughts, words, and hearts, with all their affections. This form is used when we commence

reading the first and last Gospel at Mass, and it points out that we should never blush at the Cross of Jesus Christ, nor at the maxims of the Gospel, and that we should always be ready to confess outwardly before men the truths which we believe in our hearts. A very sweet practice is adopted by pious persons, and that is, of forming secretly the sign of the cross on their hearts, either for the purpose of obtaining some particular grace, or to obtain strength from on high to resist some temptation ; and this pious practice always produces happy results.

Q. Why do you make the sign of the Cross ?

A. To beg that Jesus Christ, by His Cross and passion, may bless and protect us.

2. " We make the sign of the Cross ", dear children, to show that we are the disciples of Jesus Christ ; for the cross is our standard and badge, and the arms of our heavenly King, our God, and crucified Saviour. By this sign we show that we blush not at His humiliation, but look upon it as His and our highest glory ; and that we pay Him all honour, praise, and homage, for bearing the Cross for our sakes. Let others boast of garters, ribbons, and stars, which are worn and prized because they are the badges of honours conferred by kings ; but we glory in wearing the livery, and bearing the holy ensign of the King of kings. " We make the sign of the Cross ", in particular, " to beg that Jesus Christ ", through His precious sufferings and death, may grant us every favour and blessing—may arm us with heavenly strength against our spiritual enemies, visible and invisible—" may bless and protect us " " by His cross and passion ", from the many dangers that surround us, and rescue us from the snares which the devil and the world are continually laying in order to entrap us.

3. The martyrs armed themselves with this saving sign when they were about to engage with their persecutors. It is recorded in the acts of St. Euplius, martyr, "that before he answered the President, he boldly signed his forehead with his hand". When St. Theodatus, in the year 303, was brought before the judge, he armed his whole body with the sign of Cross. We are told by St. Athanasius, in his life of St. Anthony, that by making "the sign of the Cross", that great saint banished the spectres and phantoms which the devil had raised to affright and disturb him. The Cross fills with terror that infernal fiend, and the sight of that glorious standard he cannot bear, for it was by it he was overthrown, and stripped of his power over our souls. Let us, then, use it like the primitive Christians, to implore God's blessing and protection; but let us use it like them, with sentiments of love and devotion; for to use this sacred sign in a careless, indifferent manner, without attention or respect, is to profane the Cross and to mock God.*

Q. Should we frequently make the sign of the Cross?

A. Yes; particularly in all temptations and dangers, and before and after prayer; but always with great attention and devotion.

4. As, dear children, "the sign of the Cross" is a sign of benediction, grace, and salvation, we should often make it. Whenever any duty is to be undertaken—whenever any act is to be put into execution—we should first bless ourselves, or "make the sign of the Cross"; for there is nothing more in accordance with the spirit of Christianity than this sweet practice of invoking the three Persons of the adorable Trinity at the beginning of all our actions.

By making "the sign of the Cross" at the commencement of our labours and undertakings, we refer them all to God, and we obtain, through the merits of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, the graces necessary to perform them well. The frequent use of "the sign of the Cross" has given offence to those dissenting from us in belief; and the practice of it has been altogether abolished by Protestant sects. But the Church, as the faithful guardian of the usages that have been handed down to her, has been ever zealous to retain and observe the old and pious custom. She begins all her divine offices by the august "sign of the Cross", and frequently during the day she obliges her ministers to repeat it.

5. And, dear children, if you also commence your principal actions in this way, how holy will they be; how meritorious and pleasing in the sight of God! How many graces will this pious commencement draw down on all your labours, occupations, and duties! It will sanctify all your works, and sweeten all the crosses and trials that during the day you may have to encounter. By attending to this holy exercise, all your actions will be well performed, and you will not have to reproach yourselves at the close of the day with the commission of wicked or dishonest acts. For who that has practised "the sign of the Cross" when about to engage in any affair, has ever been known to be guilty of injustice in his dealings with his fellow-man? What servant who signs himself often with the cross, has been unfaithful to his master? If, when tempted to enter any place that may be an occasion of sin to you—as, for instance, a public-house, a gambling-house, a play-house—you make the sign of the cross, saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", would you dare enter such a place? Assuredly not. The Cross and the adorable Persons

of the Trinity would touch your conscience, and say to you : Check your steps, unhappy man ! for where think you are you going ? You are about to cast yourself into the snares of Satan, and defile your soul with guilt, and still you are invoking the God who reprobates every evil act, and you sign yourself with the Cross on which your Redeemer died to expiate sin ! We are told that a certain painter invariably made "the sign of the Cross" before he commenced his work. About to engage one day at the painting of an immoral subject, he, as usual, signed himself with the form of the Cross. He had scarcely concluded the act, when he at once perceived the wide contrast between the sign of salvation and the subject at which he was about to engage. He arrested his hand, laid down his pencil, and laid aside the work of sin.

6. "Particularly in all temptations and dangers" we should "make the sign of the Cross", in order to obtain of God, through the merits of His cross and passion, the graces necessary to avoid all the snares and dangers to which we are exposed here below. Temptation is of all dangers the most to be dreaded ; but "the sign of the Cross", when it is made with faith and devotion, that is, with confidence in Jesus Christ, and with a sincere desire of serving Him, puts the devils to flight, and dispels temptations. St. Ephrem styles "the sign of the cross" the armour of a true Christian, and admonishes every one to cover himself with "the sign of the Cross" as with a shield, impressing it on his limbs and his heart : "for this is an invincible armour, and no one can hurt thee if thou art covered with it ; for it is the conqueror of death, the destroyer of heresies, the opener of the gates of Paradise, the prophetic guard of the Church". He who bears upon his person the image of his sovereign is protected against insult ; and so,

how secure must that Christian be against every attack of the enemy, who bears on his person the Standard of the King of kings ! At the sight of it the powers of hell are affrighted.

7. When, dear children, you are tempted to sin ; when any evil thoughts arise in your minds ; if you find yourselves prone to impatience, pride, anger, or impurity, at once "make the sign of the Cross" on your forehead or breast. If circumstances be such that you cannot do it openly, make it at least secretly in your heart ; and assuredly, if it be accompanied with a detestation of sin, and a sincere desire not to yield to the tempter, you will triumph over all his efforts, and put to flight his wicked suggestions. St. Anthony, one of the Fathers of the desert, used to say to his disciples : " I have only to 'make the sign of the Cross' to put to flight all the delusions and spells of the demon. Yes, this 'sign of the Cross' of the Saviour, which has deprived him of his power, is enough to make him tremble". Can we for a moment doubt of the efficacy of this saving sign, in putting to flight every temptation, after the testimony of this great saint, who in the many great conflicts waged by him against the devil, had experience of its happy results ? Let us, then, like him, "make the sign of the Cross" whenever we meet with temptations, and we will receive such strength and interior courage, as will enable us to say with the same confidence as he did to all the powers of hell : " Well ! I am still prepared to continue the battle. No, nothing will ever separate me from Jesus, my Saviour".

8. " In all dangers" we should also "make the sign of the Cross". Ah! dear children, how many are the dangers of this life ! We meet with "danger" at almost every step we take. Our life hangs, as it were, on a thread ; for we are every moment in

danger of meeting with some accident or other. The preservation of our life is a continued miracle of Providence, which conducts us as if by the hand, in the midst of rocks and precipices. When, then, we are surrounded on every side with "dangers"; when we are threatened with death, from fire, or water, or earthquakes, or pestilence; when the lightning flashes, and the thunder rolls; when we are on the brink of a precipice, and in danger of falling in the gulf below, let us have recourse at once to "the sign of the Cross", and its saving power shall shield us from all harm. In making "the sign of the Cross" under these and similar circumstances, and provided it be accompanied with sorrow for our sins, we shall be rescued by Jesus Christ from all those "dangers", and brought out of a great many difficulties.

9. "Before and after prayer", too, "the sign of the Cross" should be always made. The Church commences all her prayers and offices by making "the sign of the Cross", and invoking the three Persons of the adorable Trinity; and surely there can be no better introduction to the exercises of religion. "The sign of the Cross", when made with devotion, will recall all our wandering thoughts and fix our attention on the important subject—as prayer is—on which we are about to enter. When we call to our minds that it is to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, that we are about to address ourselves, we shall be careful to remove all distracting thoughts, and keep ourselves in His divine presence. As prayer is peculiarly the gift of God, and as it is by means of it that we obtain His choicest favours and blessings, we should on that account acquit ourselves worthily of it, and render it as perfect as we possibly can; for "cursed is he who does the work of God negligently". But by making "the sign of the Cross" before prayer, we consecrate that

prayer to God, and so God will give us the grace of performing it well.

10. "After prayer", sign yourself with the "Cross", that you may testify that the lights and graces received in prayer proceed from the adorable Trinity, and that the spirit and good fruits of prayer flow from the merits of the "Cross" of our Saviour. But let us always be careful, dear children, when we make "the sign of the Cross", to perform it "with great attention and devotion", always bearing in mind that in signing ourselves in the form of a "Cross", we invoke God the Father, who created us; God the Son, who redeemed us; and God the Holy Ghost, who sanctified us. If you sign yourselves without "attention and devotion", you profane that sacred symbol, and so far from honouring the Trinity, your act is an injury to and mockery of the Trinity.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE LUMINOUS CROSS SEEN BY CONSTANTINE.

Christ, who conquered the world, not by the sword, but by the ignominy of the Cross, was pleased to make Constantine the Great triumph by that sacred sign, that he might know the hand by which he was assisted. This emperor marched from the border of the Rhine through Gaul and part of Italy, by Verona, to Rome, against the tyrant Maxentius, who had declared war against him. Constantine, though he was not yet a Christian, earnestly invoked the one true God, both on his march, and on the day before he gave battle, and Christ was pleased by a double vision to show him from what power he received the empire of the world. The fact is circumstantially related by Eusebius, as he heard it from Constantine himself. Having passed the Alps, and reached the plains of Italy, behold, as he was marching on, a little after mid-day, at the head of his troops, a luminous cross appeared in the open sky, above the sun, and upon the cross a legend expressing victory was distinctly seen by all, written

thus in Greek characters: "In this be thou conqueror". The night following, Christ appeared to Constantine in his sleep, with the same sign, and commanded him to have a representation of it made, and to make use of it for his standard in battle. The emperor arose very early the next morning, imparted this second vision to his friends, and gave orders for an exact representation of the cross as it appeared in the sky, to be made and blazoned in the imperial banner. This was the famous "Labarum", which fifty chosen men were appointed to carry by turns before the emperor whenever he went to battle. It was a pole plated with gold, upon which was laid horizontally a cross bar so as to form the figure of a cross. The top of the perpendicular shaft was adorned with a crown wrought with gold and ornamented with sparkling precious stones.

MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS IN THE EAST.

† The Greek schismatics do not make the sign of the cross in the same manner as it is formed by the members of the Catholic Church. The Jacobites—Eutychian heretics—form the sign with one finger, from the left to the right, thus signifying, as they say, their belief in the unity of our Lord's nature, and in the translation of grace, passing from the left side, which is sin, to the right, signifying pardon. The Nestorians, on the other hand, form the sign of the cross with two fingers, from the right to the left, significant of both natures, which they admit in Jesus Christ, and of the manifestation of the faith proceeding from the right, or the good principle, victorious over the left, signifying the bad principle.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. In what manner is the sign of the Cross usually made?
2. For what ends do we so often make the sign of the Cross?
3. Did the martyrs and saints, in the early age of the Church, make use of the sign of the Cross?
4. Should we make the sign of the Cross before our principal duties?
5. What good results arise from making the sign of the Cross?

6. What says St. Ephrem about the efficacy of the sign of the Cross ?

7. Is the sign of the Cross a safeguard against temptation ?

8. When surrounded by danger, should we make the sign of the Cross ?

9. Why is the sign of the Cross made before prayer ?

10. Should we make the sign of the Cross after prayer ?

PRACTICE.

1. In imitation of the saints, often make the sign of the Cross ; but in particular when assaulted by temptations.

2. In making the sign of the Cross, think on the goodness of the three adorable Persons of the blessed Trinity, by whom you were created, redeemed, and sanctified.

PRAYER.

My God ! we return Thee thanks for Thy great gifts, and in particular for Thy loving condescension in coming down from Thy bright throne in Heaven, and offering up Thy precious life on the Cross. If hitherto we have not made the sign of the Cross with that respect due to it, we now regret our indifference, and promise to make it evermore with every attention and respect. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS, CONTINUED.

Q. Are there any other occasions when we should make the sign of the cross ?

A. Yes ; we should make it in the morning when we awake, and on lying down at night, and also before and after meals.

1. "In the morning when awaking" we should make the sign of the Cross. We owe everything to God ; every act we perform should be given to Him,

but particularly the first action of the day, for that is most pleasing to HIm, as by that first act we offer to Him all the others; and by it, too, we obtain His blessing, which shall attend us through the entire day. "From the morning", says the Holy Ghost, "the wise man shall raise his heart to think upon God his Creator". Let your first care, on awaking, be then, dear children, to "make the sign of the Cross", invoking at the same time the three Persons of the Trinity. If in this way you offer to the Lord all the actions of the day, He will shower down His graces and blessings on you, and render all you do and say during the day worthy of an eternal reward.

2. "On lying down at night", we should finish the day as we began it, by arming ourselves with "the sign of the Cross"; for we are then about, as it were, entering another world—plunging into sleep, which is the emblem of death; and who can tell that the sleep which we are about to enjoy may not, before morning, pass into death! A great many have retired to bed at night quite well, and never saw the morning. Then, before lying down, sign yourself, and sprinkle your bed with holy water, in the form of a cross, saying: "Preserve me, O Lord! from the dangers of the night. Keep far from me the roaring lion, who is seeking whom he may devour; let all my enemies be put to flight, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost". And if, during the night, you are assailed by any filthy temptations, arm yourself with the sign of salvation, which, according to St. Jerome, "is the shield of faith, by which all the fiery darts of the devil are extinguished".

3. "Before meals", when seated at table, we should, in imitation of our Lord, look up towards Heaven, and bless God for His great kindness in bestowing on us all the necessities of life, while a great

many others are deprived of them. Another reason why we should "make the sign of the Cross" when sitting down to eat, is the danger that very often arises from eating even the food most indispensable to the support of life. Persons have sometimes fallen down dead at table on account of some poisonous herbs served up with the meats of which they partook. But "the sign of the Cross" is a preventative against all dangers of that kind. A cup was one day presented to St. Benedict, Patriarch of the Western Monks, in which with wine was mixed some poison. He made "the sign of the Cross" over the cup before drinking, as was his ordinary practice, when lo! the cup at once fell down broken on the floor.

4. "After meals", too, we should sign ourselves with "the Cross", and return God thanks for His benefits; for is it not He that covers our fields with abundant crops, and provides us with the meat with which we are fed? Is it not He that has furnished us with fruit and those viands which are so pleasing to our palates? As He is, then, the bestower of all those gifts, never arise from table without first returning Him thanks by making that sacred sign. Do not imitate the conduct of certain persons, who, divested of every sentiment of religion and feeling of gratitude, eat and drink without one look towards Him who supplies them with food and drink. Even the dog licks the hands of one who casts him a mouthful of food; and shall a Christian blush to invoke a kind God who loads his table with the choicest meats?

5. For know, dear children, that it is at the table of those who are in the enjoyment of all the luxuries of life—it is at the most sumptuous repasts—that this duty of invoking the blessed Trinity is neglected, and, what is more, considered as a vulgar practice; whilst at the table of the poor man, who has just as

much coarse fare as barely preserves life, God is thanked, and the adorable Trinity invoked by “the sign of the Cross”. Is it in the sacred Writings that is to be found the principle, that the more we receive from God the less grateful we should feel? Certainly not in the writings of St. Paul, for he tells us that “whether you eat or drink, do all for the glory of God” (*I. Cor.*, x. 31).

Q. What does the sign of the Cross signify?

A. It signifies and brings to our minds the principal mysteries of religion.

6. “The sign of the Cross”, which owes all its excellency to the passion and death of Jesus Christ, “signifies and brings to our minds” those “principal mysteries” which are the foundation of the Christian religion. In the Christian religion there are, you know, a great many mysteries—that is, a great many truths, which we cannot comprehend, and which, yet, we must believe, because it is God Himself who has revealed them. Of those mysteries there are three which are called “principal mysteries”. Every thing taught by Christianity is contained in, or has a reference to, these three great truths; and by making “the sign of the Cross”, we bring “to our minds” and make a profession of all three. Thus, it follows, that by “the sign of the Cross” we profess our belief in all the mysteries and in all the truths which our Faith teaches us. As “the sign of the Cross” is a ceremony so serious and important, how careful we should be in making it with every sentiment of piety, and pronouncing with devotion the words: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”!

Q. What mysteries of religion does the sign of the Cross recall to our minds?

A. The blessed Trinity, and the Incarnation and Death of our Saviour.

7. "The sign of the Cross recalls to our minds" the blessed Trinity, which, as you have been already told, dear children, is the mystery of One only God, in three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The very "sign of the Cross" implies, too, the belief of "the Incarnation and death of our Saviour". The mystery of the "Incarnation" of Christ is the mystery of the Son of God born of the Blessed Virgin, and dying on a cross to redeem and save man. Hence, "the sign of the Cross" has always been looked upon as the most sacred badge and distinctive mark of Christians. By it, the martyrs declared their faith before their persecutors ; and a Christian being asked his religion, often answered by this sign rather than by words.

Q. How does the sign of the Cross remind us of the Blessed Trinity ?

A. Because, in making the sign of the Cross, we invoke the three divine Persons, saying : In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

8. In saying : "In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost", we profess our belief in three Persons in God, really distinct one from the other ; and by using the word "name" in the singular, not *names* in the plural number, we express our belief that these three Persons have the same sole and undivided nature or divine essence, and consequently are but one God. In carrying the

hand from the forehead to the breast, we declare our belief that the Father, by the knowledge which He has of Himself, begets His Son from all eternity; and in carrying the hand from the left shoulder to the right, we confess that the Holy Ghost is the tie and love of the Father and Son, and that He proceeds from both one and the other.

Q. How does the sign of the Cross bring to our minds the Incarnation and Death of our Saviour?

A. Because, as He suffered death in human flesh on a cross, the sign of the Cross must naturally remind all true Christians of His Incarnation and Death.

9. In carrying the hand from the forehead to the breast, we express that the Son of God descended from the bosom of His Father into the womb of the Blessed Virgin, and that He there became *Incarnate*, or clothed with our nature; and so we signify both His eternal and temporal generation. In carrying the hand from the left to the right shoulder, and so perfecting the sign of the Cross, we express that our Lord Jesus Christ, by His sufferings and by His Cross, has drawn us from the state of damnation in which we had long lain, and has reinstated us in all our rights to the happiness of Heaven. In making "the sign of the Cross", we are *reminded* of "His Incarnation", of the humiliations and the indignities He was pleased to suffer for us; of the great examples and lessons of patience, humility, and every virtue which He has set us.

10. And we are "naturally" *reminded*, too, of the sufferings and torments He subjected Himself to for our sake, and of the painful, torturing, and ignominious death which He underwent on the tree of

the Cross, through His excessive love for us. You now see, dear children, that the sign which we trace on our forehead, breast, and shoulders is a striking picture, recalling forcibly to our minds the sorrowful death of a God for poor wretched sinners. Whenever, therefore, you "make the sign of the Cross", let it be done with recollection and piety, saying in your heart: The Son of God died for me on the Cross! Ah! my dear Redeemer, how can I recall to my mind a remembrance so touching, without shedding tears of grief, pity, love, gratitude, and sorrow!

Q. Where are true Christians to be found?

A. Only in the true Church.

11. To become "true Christians", we must be members of the "true Church"; for to be a sincere Christian, it is not enough to believe in the Trinity and the Incarnation and Death of our Saviour; we must believe, together with these principal mysteries, everything that Christ has taught; but it is "only in the true Church" that we can find everything which Christ has taught. "You cannot have God for your father", says St. Cyprian, "if you have not the Church for your mother". To be "true Christians" it will not suffice to be just, temperate, and sober; to be mild, patient, and charitable; to be tender-hearted and compassionate towards others; no more than all that is required; we must perform all that God has commanded—but it is "only in the true Church" we can know what God has commanded. So that let a man be ever so peaceable, regular, inoffensive, and religious in his way, charitable to the poor, and what else you please; yet, with all these apparent virtues, he cannot be a "true Christian" unless he belongs to the true Church. In the true Church, and only in the true Church, can real, sincere Christians be found.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE MAKING THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

* Julian the Apostate one day entered a pagan temple, in company with a noted idolater. The latter having invoked the demons, they at once made their appearance : Julian became alarmed ; and forgetting, for the moment, that he had abjured the Christian religion, he made the sign of the cross, as he had been formerly accustomed to do when any danger was near. Immediately the infernal spirits disappeared—so powerful and efficacious was this sign, when made even by a Christian renegade ! This miracle was the last effort of divine mercy to recall that wretched being to repentance ; but the unhappy man's heart was hardened and insensible to every call of God.

THE EMPEROR HERACLIUS AND THE RELIC OF THE CROSS.

† The Emperor Heraclius having brought to Jerusalem the precious relic of the Cross (which had been discovered by St. Helen some years before), in order to thank God for his victories over the Persians, was desirous to carry it upon his own shoulders into the city with the greatest pomp. When entering the city he stopped suddenly, and found he was not able to go forward. The Patriarch Zachary, who walked by his side, suggested to him that his pomp seemed not agreeable to the humble appearance which Christ made, when He bore His Cross through the streets of that city : “ You”, said he, “ walk in your gaudy imperial robes ; He was meanly clad ; you have on your head a rich diadem ; He was crowned with a wreath of thorns ; you go with your shoes on ; He walked barefoot”. Hereupon the Emperor laid aside his purple and his crown, put on mean clothes, went along barefoot with the procession, and devoutly placed the Cross where it stood before. It still continued in the silver case in which it had been carried away by Chosroes fifteen years before : and the Patriarch and clergy, finding the seals whole, opened the case with the key, venerated it, and showed it to the people.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Should we make the sign of the Cross when awaking in the morning ?

2. Is the sign of the Cross to be made when lying down at night?
3. Why should we make the sign of the Cross before meals?
4. Is the sign of the Cross recommended after meals?
5. What do you think of the neglect of the sign of the Cross at the tables of the rich?
6. In making the sign of the Cross, do we make a profession of faith?
7. Does the sign of the Cross remind us of the blessed Trinity and the Incarnation?
8. In making the sign of the Cross, do we profess our belief in the Trinity?
9. How does the sign of the Cross remind us of the Incarnation?
13. In making the sign of the Cross, what should be our sentiments?
11. Why can there be no sincere Christian out of the true Church?

PRACTICE.

1. Let your title, as Christian, be always considered by you as the most honourable that you bear.
2. St. Louis preferred his title of Christian to that of King of France, and signed himself Louis of Poissy, because he was baptized there.
3. Recollect that if now you are ashamed of the Cross of Christ, Christ will not recognize you on the last day as one of His disciples.

PRAYER.

O sweet Jesus! pardon us for not having hitherto shown sufficient respect to the Cross—the emblem of our salvation. We have often made the sign of the Cross with indifference and inattention, but we promise, dear Lord, that in future, when making this sacred sign, we shall ever think with gratitude of the Father who created us, of the Son who redeemed us, and of the Holy Ghost who sanctified us. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ON THE TRUE CHURCH.

Q. What do you mean by the true Church ?

A. The congregation of the faithful, who, being baptized, profess the same doctrine, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors, under one visible head on earth.

1. The word church, in its general signification, means an assembly or society, whether good or bad ; for the Latin word *ecclesia* is derived from the Greek *ἐκκλησία*, which has as its root *ἐκκαλέω*, I call together, or I convoke. But here by the word Church we understand a society of true believers in Jesus Christ, united upon earth. In this sense the saints in Heaven, called the Church triumphant, and the just in purgatory, called the Church suffering, are not included in the term "True Church". The True Church can be applied only to the society of the faithful, that is, men still living, who, "being baptized", believe in Jesus Christ, and obey Him ; who "profess the same doctrine", for the Church does not recognize as her children those who alter or dismember her faith ; who "partake of the same sacraments", for it is by the sacraments we are united to one another and to Jesus, and so united make one religious body ; who "are governed by their lawful pastors", for to refuse acknowledging as pastors those whom Jesus Christ has established to govern the faithful, destroys all unity both with Jesus Christ and among ourselves ; who "are under one visible head on earth", the Pope and Bishop of Rome, for he is the Vicar of Christ, and under Christ the key-stone of the whole fabric, and the bond of union

amongst the pastors of the Church. Christ Himself declares, that all who belong to Him "shall be one fold and one shepherd" (*John, x. 16*).

Q. How do you call the true Church?

A. The Holy Catholic Church.—*Apost. Creed.*

2. In the early ages of the Church, the Christians were called *disciples* or *brethren*, and the whole body was called the Church of the disciples of Jesus Christ. But when heresies sprung up in her bosom, and when each sect arrogated to itself the name of Church, "the true Church" was commonly called the "Holy Catholic Church"—as from the beginning the Apostles had designated it in the *Creed*—to distinguish it from all heretical societies. The words *Apostolical* and *Roman* were added as a further distinctive mark by which "the true Church" could be recognized. In another chapter we shall see whether or not "the Holy Catholic Church" be entitled to the glorious and distinctive marks applied to her.

3. "The true Church" is called "the Holy Catholic Church", because Jesus Christ, its Founder and invisible Head, is not only holy, but the very source of holiness; because the doctrine which she teaches is holy, and no other teaching than what is holy will she ever hold, as she is continually instructed by Jesus Christ. She is, too, called "Holy", because her laws, her worship, her ceremonies, her sacraments, and her sacrifice are holy, and because it is in the true Church alone that holiness can be found. The Church is called "Catholic", because she is the Church of all ages and of all nations, and is limited neither by time nor space. She is universal in her extent, and perpetual in her duration; she is the first and oldest communion of Christians in the world. It is from her that all nations first received their

faith. It is she that has converted the different empires and kingdoms of the earth, and it is she alone that is to be found in every country and under every clime.

Q. Is there any other true Church besides the Holy Catholic Church?

A. No; as there is but one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, there is but one true Church—*Ephes.*, iv.

4. There cannot, dear children, be “any other true Church besides the Holy Catholic Church”, for Christ tells us, that there is but “one fold and one shepherd—*John*, x. 16. And as, according to St. Paul, there is but “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all”, there can be only “one true Church”, and that true Church can be no other than “the Holy Catholic Church”. The Holy Catholic Church is that *one* only body whose members are all united together “in one” and the same faith, are all of the same communion, and are governed by one and the same supreme authority. And though the members of “the Holy Catholic Church” are exceedingly numerous, and spread throughout the whole known world, and differ from one another in almost everything else—in their country, in their language, in their customs, in their government, and in their worldly interests—yet they are all perfectly united in religion. They everywhere believe the same divine truths, profess the same faith, teach the same doctrine, preach the same Gospel; so that wherever any one belonging to that Church goes, no matter how distant the country be, he always finds himself at home with those of the communion of “the Holy Catholic Church”, as to religious matters.

5. But on the contrary, no sooner does any sect break off from that Church—and several have done so in all preceding ages—than immediately the curse of division seems to fall upon them. One sect condemns the other, so much so, that even among those who are of the same country, under the same government, using the same language, having the same customs and the same common interest, and very often of the same family, you will find very few that hold the same belief in all points of religion. Surely the true Church cannot exist among such jarring sects, who are divided and subdivided without end. “The Holy Catholic Church” alone must, then, be the “true Church”, for it has in its own bosom the principle of union among all its members ; it has a fixed, invariable, and unerring standard, instituted by the Son of God Himself, to bind it together.

Q. Are all obliged to be of the true Church ?

A. Yes ; no one can be saved out of it.—*Acts*, ii. ; *Luke*, x. ; *John*, x. ; *Matt.*, xviii.

6. A terrible sentence is that, dear children, and as true as it is alarming ! Yes ; it is an article of our faith, that “no one can be saved out of the true Church”. One may be out of the Church either by not knowing Jesus Christ at all or His doctrine, or, though knowing Him, by not submitting to what He has taught. In the first case, he cannot be saved, for St. Peter tells us, in clear language : “Neither is there salvation in any other—(the name of our Lord Jesus Christ) :—for there is no other name under heaven given to men wherewith we must be saved”—*Acts*, iv. 12. In the second case—that is, knowing Jesus Christ, but refusing to submit to what Jesus Christ has taught, by not hearing the

Church, one cannot be saved either ; for Christ tells us that we must consider "one who does not hear the Church as a heathen and a publican" (*Matt.*, xvii. 17).

7. Of the many other texts of Scripture which go to prove that out "of the true Church" there can be no salvation, we shall only insert two here. Christ, speaking of those who were not yet joined in the communion of His Church, but who He foreknew would make a good use of the graces He would give them for that purpose, says : "Other sheep I have who are not of this fold, them also I MUST BRING, and they shall hear My voice, and they shall be one fold and one shepherd" (*John*, x. 16). In this passage He plainly declares that all those of His sheep, who are not of His fold, must, as a necessary condition of their salvation, be brought to that fold. Again, in the *Acts of the Apostles* we read that the Gospel had no sooner been preached, than at once "the Lord added daily to the Church such as should be saved" (*Acts*, ii. 47); which clearly shows that all who are not *added* to the Church are out of the way of salvation.*

8. That out of the pale "of the true Church" no one can be saved, is a point of belief handed down in every age from the origin of Christianity to the present time. St. Cyprian tells us "that he who has not the Church for his mother cannot have God for his father"; and with him the Fathers in general say : "That as'all who were not in the ark of Noah perished in the waters of the deluge, so shall all perish who are without the pale of the true Church !" Besides, to assert that a person can be saved out of the true Church of Christ, is neither more nor less than to say that God is indifferent to any form of worship, and that the worship paid Him by those who, for example, deny that there are three Persons in God,

or that God became man, is equally as pleasing to Him as that paid by those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as their Redeemer, and who firmly believe in everything that Jesus Christ has taught; that He is equally pleased with those who distort, falsify, and refuse to believe His word, as with those who religiously observe all His words, and believe them. Can anything be imagined more absurd, more revolting, than to say that God, whom we serve, is indifferent to truth or error! Yet this is the principle of all those who say that every form of worship is good, and that one can be saved in whatever religion he professes.

Q. Is it not a very uncharitable doctrine, to say that none can be saved out of the Church?

A. It is not uncharitable doctrine, for it is the teaching of Christ Himself.

9. If the doctrine that no person "can be saved out of the Church" were a mere human opinion, or the result of human reasoning, it might appear uncharitable. But as the sacred Writings declare in the plainest and strongest terms, that God has been pleased to ordain that none shall be saved out of the Church of Christ, or without the true faith, who can be so rash as to assert that a "doctrine" taught and declared by God Himself, is uncharitable? A great many pronounce this doctrine uncharitable, because they never reflect on this great truth, that God Almighty is not bound to save any one. As He pursued the rebellious angels with the greatest rigour of justice, could He not treat man in the same way? And if He be pleased to promise salvation to all mankind, through the merits of Jesus Christ, it is to be attributed to His infinite goodness and mercy. But if He be perfect master of His own gifts, He certainly can require what condition He pleases in

bestowing them. Now it has been made known to us over and over, in the sacred Scriptures, that it is the will of God that in order to secure the salvation of our souls, we should be members of the true Church, and profess our belief in Jesus Christ, and what He has taught. This He has frequently declared to be an indispensable condition of salvation. And who shall dare to find fault with Him for doing so? Who shall dare to say that it is uncharitable to believe what He has declared so often and so expressly in the holy Scriptures?

10. And the Catholic Church is not the only Church which holds this doctrine. It is the doctrine of the Church of England, and of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. The Church of England, in one of the articles of her creed, says, "that except a man do keep the Catholic faith whole and undefiled, he shall, without doubt, perish everlasting". Moreover, she affirms "that those are to be accursed who presume to say that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth". If, therefore, this doctrine be deemed uncharitable, the Churches both of England and Scotland must be condemned for their uncharitableness. However, the Church of Christ cares little about being taunted with want of charity, in teaching the doctrine that "out of the true Church, and without true faith, there can be no salvation", for it is a doctrine taught by her divine Master, and a truth revealed by God.

11. So far from deeming her doctrine "uncharitable", the true Church considers it as the height of charity to warn all men of their danger, in an affair of such great importance as that of their eternal welfare; and taking pity on their state, she uses every means in her power, particularly that of prayer, to lead all who are going astray, into the right path, that they may be brought to the knowledge of truth, and

be saved. If St. Paul was not uncharitable when he pronounced "a curse upon any one, though he were an Angel from Heaven, who should preach any other Gospel than what he had preached"; how can the Catholic Church be deemed uncharitable for saying only what he said, and from the same charitable motive? It was through his ardent charity that St. Paul thus warned the Corinthians of their danger; and it is through a motive of similar charity that the Church of Christ loudly declares the great truth, that out of her pale no salvation can be obtained, and that those who live in a false religion, however unexceptionable their moral conduct be in the eyes of men, are not in the way of salvation, as they want the true faith in Christ, and are not in charity with God.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ST. CYPRIAN ON THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

* In his book on the Unity of the Church, St. Cyprian observes that the devil sows heresy and schism in order to subvert souls which have already escaped the snares of idolatry. After this he demonstrates that the Church of Christ is essentially one. He tells us that, for a visible mark of unity, Christ built His Church upon St. Peter, and gave the power of His keys to him. Again he says that no one can ever attain the recompense promised by Christ to His followers who deserts His Church. He becomes thence unsanctified, an alien, and a downright enemy. He cannot have God for his Father who hath not the Church for his mother. Could any one escape who was not with Noah in the ark? The coat of Christ was not rent or divided. Being seamless and undivided, it is a lively emblem to us of that inseparable union which must be maintained among His followers. There can be no such thing as martyrdom out of the Church. Though those should be thrown into the fire, or be exposed to the fury of wild beasts, such a death will never be esteemed a crown of their faith and constancy, but rather a punishment of their

perfidy. Such a man may be put to death, but cannot be crowned. There is but one God, one Christ, one Church, one Faith, and one entire body of Christian people. Whatever shall be separated from the fountain of life, can have no life remaining in it, after having lost all communication with its vital principles.

THE CAUSE OF MARTIN LUTHER'S APOSTACY.

† For the publication of indulgences granted by Pope Leo to all who should contribute towards the expenses of the erection of St. Peter's Church at Rome, preachers were nominated in every state in Europe to explain their nature and spiritual effects, according to the doctrine of the Catholic Church. In Saxony, the Augustinian Friars, who on previous occasions were appointed to announce the indulgences, were mortified at finding that the Dominicans were for this once preferred before them. Warm with resentment, or with zeal for the honour of their body, the most popular preachers amongst them mounted the pulpit, and exerted all the oratory they were masters of, to do away with the disgrace which they fancied to be thrown upon them. Of these the most conspicuous was Martin Luther, doctor and professor of divinity in the new university of Wittenberg, then in the thirty-fourth year of his age, and the twelfth of his religious profession. The vocation of this extraordinary man to a cenobitical state of life seems to have sprung from mere fright. During the course of his studies he one day walked abroad with one of his fellow-students; a tremendous storm came on, a vivid flash of lightning struck his companion dead at his feet. Trembling with fear, he that instant vowed to devote himself to God in some monastic order; his entrance among the hermits of St. Augustin was the accomplishment of his vow. His proficiency in science made him pass for a good divine; and a copious flow of words gained him the repute of a good preacher. Such was Martin Luther when he stepped forward to depress the merit of the Dominican order. Equally rough and fiery in his temper, he broke through all the bounds of decency in his invectives against them. A low kind of vulgar wit was familiar to him. The University of Wittenberg and Frederic, the Elector of Saxony, openly espoused his interests. Emboldened by this support, he began to inveigh against the very nature of indulgences and the power of granting them. The strange doctrines advanced by Luther had now excited great commotion in the Catholic world. They were examined,

and found to be erroneous. He was summoned to retract them. His pride could not stoop to that humiliation. He at first dissembled, and in his letter to the Pope he says, "Give me life or death, approve or disapprove, I will hear your voice as the voice of Jesus Christ". He afterwards refused to retract or acknowledge any errors that he had written. His writings were then solemnly condemned by the Pope, and he himself was excommunicated in the year 1520. To the confusion of his friends, and to his own indelible disgrace, he, in the year 1525, seduced a professed nun, the beautiful Catherine Boren, from her convent, then married her, and continued to cohabit with her for twenty-one years, till he died in 1546.—*Reeve's History of the Church.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What is required in order to be members of the true Church?
2. When was the true Church called the Holy Catholic Church?
3. Why is the true Church called the Holy and Catholic Church?
4. How do you prove that the Holy Catholic Church is the only true one?
5. Can the true Church exist among Protestant sects?
6. How do you prove that no one can be saved out of the true Church?
7. Have you any more texts in support of that doctrine?
8. Can you assign the reasons why no one out of the true Church can be saved?
9. How do you show that the doctrine of exclusive salvation is not uncharitable?
10. What is the teaching of the Protestant Churches of England and Scotland, with regard to exclusive salvation?
11. Is the Church charitable in asserting that none can be saved out of her pale?

PRACTICE.

1. Return thanks to God, if not every day, at least on Sundays and Festivals, for having brought you up in the Catholic Church, whilst so many others have been left in the darkness of paganism and error.

2. Become every day more and more attached to the Holy Church, and cheerfully submit to her teaching.

3. Mourn for those who are separated from the true Church, and daily pray for their conversion.

PRAYER.

My God ! we firmly believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and in all she teaches, for she alone is the true Church. Out of her pale, we know that no one can be saved. Grant, dear Lord, that we may always continue sincere and obedient children of mother Church, and that our lives may never belie our faith. If, hitherto, we have not been docile and tractable to her, we now regret it, and promise that henceforward we shall always be submissive to her teachings. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXV.

FAITH AND GOOD WORKS.

Q. Will strict honesty to every one, and moral good works, insure salvation, whatever Church or religion one professes ?

A. No ; unless such good works be enlivened “ by faith that worketh by charity ” (*Gal.*, v. 6).

1. To “ insure eternal salvation ”, neither justice nor honesty, neither temperance nor sobriety, neither mildness nor patience, nor any other “ moral good works ”, will alone be sufficient. For it must be observed, that it is not natural “ moral good works ”, but supernatural Christian good works, which will lead a man to Heaven. Though our nature be corrupted by sin, yet there are very few of the race of Adam who are not possessed of some good qualities;

some being inclined to one virtue, more to another. But all such good natural dispositions, of themselves are very far from being Christian virtues, and are altogether incapable of leading men to Heaven. They, indeed, make the person possessed of them agreeable to his fellow-man, and procure him esteem and regard from all those with whom he lives ; but they are of no avail before God, as far as eternal life is concerned. Turks, Jews, and Heathens, equally as Christians, have good natural dispositions ; yet no Christian can for a moment think that a Turk, Jew, or Heathen, if he dies in that state, can obtain the kingdom of God by means of these virtues.

2. The Pharisees were remarkable for many “moral good works” ; they had great respect for the law of God ; they openly professed piety and devotion ; they gave large alms to the poor ; they fasted and prayed a great deal, and were strict observers of the Sabbath ; yet Jesus Christ Himself expressly declares : “ Except your righteousness exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven” (*Matt.*, v. 20). Again, we are told that a certain Pharisee went up to the temple to pray, who, in the eyes of men, was a very good man, exempt from great crimes, and who fasted twice a week ; yet Christ tells us that he was condemned in the sight of God. All this proves clearly that no good works whatsoever, performed through good natural dispositions alone, can ever be crowned by God with eternal happiness. To “insure salvation”, our “good works” must be sanctified by the blood of Jesus, become Christian virtues, and “be enlivened by faith that worketh by charity”.

Q. Why must our good works be enlivened by faith ?

A. Because the Scripture says, “without faith

it is impossible to please God ; and he that believeth not shall be condemned" (*Heb.*, xi. 16).

3. In order that "our good works" should be agreeable to God and conducive to our salvation, we must be united to Jesus Christ by true faith, which is the root and foundation of all Christian virtues ; for St. Paul expressly says, that "without faith it is impossible to please God". He does not say that it is very difficult, but that it is *impossible*, to please God without faith. Let, therefore, a person have ever so many good natural dispositions, and be as charitable, and devout, and mortified as the Pharisees were, yet if he have not true faith in Jesus Christ, he cannot enter the kingdom of Heaven. The Pharisees refused to believe in Him, and on that account all their good works went for nothing, as far as their eternal salvation was concerned. In like manner, all "our good works"—our justice, our charity, our temperance, our piety, our strict observance of the Sabbath—shall be of no avail, without faith, towards our eternal welfare, for, "if we believe not we shall be condemned", and shall suffer the torments of the damned for ever in hell. How blind and infatuated, then, are those, dear children, who think that honesty, sobriety, and other good works, no matter what their faith be, will entitle them to the kingdom of heaven ! How comes it that they forget the words of the Apostle ? How is it, that they imagine that God will not verify His words, when He says that "he who doth not believe is already judged" ?

Q. How comes it that many Catholics now-a-days seem to call into question the truth of exclusive salvation, although so evident ?

A. Because latitudinarian principles have taken deep root in the minds of many Catholics, and because in these countries it is supposed fashionable to think and speak in this manner.

4. One of the most infernal engines which the enemy of souls makes use of in these unhappy times to promote his own interest, is that liberal way of thinking and speaking on the part of Catholics, in regard to the doctrine of salvation. As they live and spend much time among those who are of another communion, and have often the most intimate connections with them, they naturally and most laudably contract a love and affection for them. This makes them first sorry to think that their friends should be out of the way of salvation. Then they proceed to wish and hope they may not be so, and from that they come to call in question *if they be so*, and to ask themselves why should not Turks, Jews, and all Protestant sects be saved, as well as Catholics. Now fashion is a most powerful persuasive, which even good people are not always proof against; and when one hears those sentiments every day resounding in his ears, and hears anything that seems contrary to them ridiculed and condemned, this naturally clouds the understanding, and discourages the mind from so much as even wishing to examine the strength of these sentiments, for fear of finding out their falsehood. When, for fear of being despised, we wish anything to be true, it is very easy to take a further step, and *believe* it to be true, and at once adopt any specious argument in its favour, and without the slightest examination pronounce it conclusive.

5. It is true, indeed, that a sincere Catholic, who understands his religion and has a just sense of what it teaches him on this head, is not influenced by any sophistical reasoning of that sort; but the great misfortune of many, who give in to these loose ways of thinking and speaking, is, that they are ignorant of the grounds of their religion; that they do not thoroughly examine the subject, but, grasping at those wretched sophisms, which are alleged in

favour of their loose way of thinking, refuse to open their eyes to the truth, or even to look at the reasons that support it. Every Catholic who is well instructed in his religion, must firmly hold that all persons out of the Church of Christ cannot be saved. If asked, whether or not a Protestant invincibly ignorant of the true religion, but yet a faithful observer of the commands of God, will be saved, the answer can be given in the affirmative, provided there be real "invincible" ignorance, that is, that the Protestant has in the first place a real and sincere desire of knowing the truth; secondly, that he is sincerely resolved to embrace the truth, wherever he may find it, and whatever it may cost him; and thirdly, that he sincerely use his best endeavours to know his duty, and particularly that he recommend the matter earnestly to God, and pray for light and direction from Him. If one has not these dispositions, his ignorance is not "invincible", it is voluntary and culpable, and if he die without being reconciled to the Church, he cannot be saved.*

Q. Are we justified by faith alone without good works?

A. No; "as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead" (*James*, ii. 26).

6. "Faith alone", without the performance of "good works", will never save any one. For although our Saviour washed us in His blood, opened the gates of Heaven for us, and made us heirs to His eternal kingdom, yet there is required on our part the performance of "good works" to entitle us to take our place in that blessed mansion. The works of penance and mortification; the curbing and overcoming of our passions, fasting, prayers, almsdeeds; in a word, the obser-

vance of all the Commandments, are required to "enter into eternal life". In the Gospel of St. Matthew we read that a young man came to our Lord, and asked what he was to do in order to arrive at Heaven, and that our Lord said to him : " If thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandments" (*Matt.*, xix.). And when the young man answered : " These things I have kept from my youth up", Jesus again said to him : " If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come and follow Me" (*Matt.*, xix.). So that you see, dear children, that " faith alone", that is, a belief in God and in what Jesus Christ has taught, will not do to obtain salvation. Together with faith, there is required " the keeping of the Commandments" and charity to the poor.

7. Again, our Saviour says, " It is not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven ; but he who doth the will of My Father who is in heaven, he it is that shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven" (*Matt.*, vii.). Therefore, believing alone will not be enough to enter the kingdom of Heaven ; we must also perform good works. " Not the hearers of the law are just before God", says St. Paul, " but the doers of the law shall be justified". Grotius, on this subject, makes a very candid and remarkable profession of his faith : " There are some", says he, " who say, my works, indeed, are not what they ought to be ; but my faith is firm, my salvation is therefore out of danger". This opinion, which has sprung up in this our unhappy age, and recommends itself under the name of reformed doctrine, ought to be opposed by every lover of piety, and all who wish well to their neighbour's salvation. In vain do we glory in our faith, unless our lives and good works bear testimony to the same,

for, as St. James says, ‘the devils also believe and tremble’”.†

Q. Must our good works be also enlivened by charity?

A. Yes; for St. Paul says, “If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor; and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing” (*I. Cor.*, xiii. 3).

8. Praying, fasting, alms-deeds, and all our other “good works”, will not be available to salvation, except we be in charity with God—in His friendship and grace. All our apparent virtue God will make no account of, if we live not in charity with Him; for nothing can avail us in Christ but “faith that works by charity”. Of all the gifts of God “charity” is the most necessary. If we have not charity, though we “should speak with the tongues of men and Angels”, we are but as “sounding brass”, or as “a tinkling cymbal”; like to those instruments, we would make noise, which, perhaps, may amuse others, but which would avail nothing in the sight of God. “Charity” is the only language of the heart which is understood by God, and renders us pleasing to Him. Though even we should have the gift of prophecy, and should know all mysteries and all knowledge, and should have faith sufficient to remove mountains, and give all we have to the poor, and surrender ourselves up to be “burned”, as St. Paul says, and perform the most astounding miracles; yet, though endowed with all these mighty powers, we are nothing before God, if charity be wanting to us. Jesus Christ Himself tells us, that on the last day a great many shall say to Him: “Lord, have we not prophesied, expelled devils, and worked many miracles in Thy name?” and

that He shall answer them, “I know you not; depart from Me”; it is not for My glory that you have done these things; vanity, self-love, the desire of attracting the esteem of the world, have been the sole motives of all your actions. What merit, therefore, can these “good works” have in My eyes?

Q. What is that charity of which St. Paul speaks?

A. That pure and sincere love of God, which makes us do His will in all things, and to be obedient to His Church, which He commands us to hear (*Matt.*, xviii. 16).

9. “That charity of which St. Paul speaks” is a gift of God, by which we love God for His own sake above all things; that is, loving Him for His own excellence and infinite goodness, more than we love ourselves, and more than anything in the world; ready to renounce all that is more dear to us, even our lives, rather than offend Him; seeking in every way to promote His honour and glory, and actuated by a desire “to do His will in all things”. The performance of His will in all we do, we should consider the most important of all ends, for Jesus Christ Himself says: “He that loves father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loves son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me” (*Matt.*, x. 37).

10. “That charity of which St. Paul speaks”, is to love “God with our whole heart, and with all our soul, and with all our strength”; that is, to live in the habitual disposition of doing everything for Him and for His sake; to submit with humility our minds and judgments to Him, rendering *obedience* to Him in everything, no matter how difficult, and also *obedience to His Church* in everything she requires

from us—*obedience* to her laws, obedience to her precepts, obedience to her teaching, submitting ourselves altogether to her guidance, resting ourselves on her as our only prop and stay, never for a moment calling into question the truth and justice of her rules and ordinances, but ever persuaded that what she does and says must necessarily be true, for Christ assures us of it when He says: “He that hears you hears Me; and he that despises you despises Me” (*Luke*, x. 16).

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

ORIGIN OF THE WORD PROTESTANT.

* In the year 1529 a Diet was held in the city of Spires, by the orders of the Emperor Charles V., and at that Diet a decision was come to, that the edict passed at Worms, condemning Luther's works to be burned, and himself, as a notorious heretic, to be put under the ban of the empire, should be observed wherever it had been received; but that wherever the ancient religion was changed, and its restoration could not be effected without public disturbance, matters should remain as they were until the celebration of a General Council. In this Diet it was also decided that Mass should freely be celebrated in the places infected with Lutheranism, and that the Gospel should be explained according to the interpretation of the Fathers approved by the Church. In the year 1531, the confederate princes of the Confession of Augsburg, at whose head was the Elector Frederic of Saxony, met at Smalkald, and *protested* against this decree as contrary to the truth of the Gospel, and promised to support each other in their protest against all compulsive measures that the Emperor might think fit to adopt against them. From this protest, made at Smalkald, they have acquired the name of Protestants, an appellation generally given to all those who profess themselves members of the so-called reformed religion.

ST. FRANCIS OF SALES, AND THEODORE OF BEZA, ON GOOD WORKS.

† Clement VIII. desired St. Francis to visit Beza, and en-

deavour to convert him to the true faith. The Saint made his way to Geneva, at the risk of his life, and called on Beza, whom he found alone. He commenced by begging Beza not to believe all he heard of him from his enemies. Beza answered that he always considered St. Francis a man of learning and merit, but that he regretted seeing him devote his energies to prop up anything so weak as the Catholic religion. St. Francis then asked him if it was his opinion that a man could be saved in the Catholic Church. Beza demanded a little time before he would give him an answer. He went into his study, remained walking about for a quarter of an hour, and then coming out, said: "Yes, I believe that a man may be saved in the Catholic Church". "Why, then", said St. Francis, "have you established your reformation with so much bloodshed and destruction, since without any danger a man may be saved and never leave the Catholic Church?" "You have put obstacles in the way of salvation", said Beza, "in the Catholic Church, by inculcating the necessity of good works; but we, by teaching salvation by faith alone, have smoothed the way to heaven". "But you", said St. Francis, "by denying the necessity of good works, destroy all human and divine laws which threaten punishment to the wicked and promise rewards to the good; and Christ says in the Gospel, that not only those who do evil, but likewise those who omit to do the good commanded to be done, shall suffer eternal punishment". When Beza saw himself thus hemmed up in a corner, and unable to answer these and similar arguments, he lost his temper, and answered the Saint's arguments only by abuse. St. Francis meekly answered, that he did not come to give him any annoyance, and then took his leave. Some time after, St. Francis paid him a second visit, and after having discussed for a considerable time many points of faith, told him that as he was now near the close of his life, he should defer his conversion no longer, but return immediately to the Church he had forsaken. Beza answered that he did not despair of salvation in his own Church. The saint then, seeing that his heart was hardened, left him, but promised to return soon again to see him. Accordingly, he visited him a third time, but without producing any effect. When he visited him for the fourth time, his words seemed to have produced an effect on the mind of Beza, and some say that he was anxious to see him again, and that he retracted his errors, and on that account that his friends gave out that his mind was deranged by sickness; but it is most probable that he died as he had lived. It is told that the governor of Montargus, conversing one day familiarly with Beza, asked him why he remained in his new

sect? Pointing out to him a young woman in his house, there is, said he, what retains me. He died in the year 1605, being then eighty years old.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Will good natural dispositions lead us to Heaven?
2. What did Christ say to the works of the Pharisees?
3. Will our good works be of any avail towards our salvation, without faith?
4. How do you account for the liberal opinions of Catholics with regard to salvation?
5. Does this liberal opinion proceed from ignorance of the principles of religion?
6. How do you prove that good works are necessary for salvation?
7. What do our Lord and St. Paul say on this subject?
8. Will our good works avail us anything without charity?
9. In what consists the great virtue of charity?
10. Does the virtue of charity require from us submission to God and obedience to His Church?

PRACTICE.

1. Firmly believe everything which the Church believes and teaches, for she is enlightened and directed by the Holy Ghost.
2. Observe with fidelity all the commandments of the Church, for she is vested by God with authority.
3. Often pray to God that, as He has made you a member of the true Church, you may live and die faithful to her.

PRAYER.

O God! how can we sufficiently thank Thee for Thy many favours and blessings, and in particular for that of being born in the true Church? As we have the happiness to be the children of the Church, we shall, by Thy heavenly aid, ever maintain the honour of that glorious title. As children of the Church, we shall always speak respectfully of our Mother, and never, by act or word, compromise the character which we bear. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ON THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

Q. What are the marks or signs of the true Church?

A. The true Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic.

1. There are in the world a great many communities called Churches. In the ninth century the Greeks separated from the Roman Church, a separation since known as the *Greek schism*, and formed a Church of their own called the Greek Church. In the commencement of the sixteenth century, Martin Luther, an apostate friar, began to preach a new doctrine, and this new doctrine was adopted by a great part of Germany, who, breaking off from the Church of Rome, formed a Church among themselves, which was called the Lutheran, or Protestant Church. In 1531, Henry VIII., King of England, after having tried every means, but in vain, with the Pope to annul his marriage with Queen Catherine, the daughter of the King of Spain, separated himself from the Holy See, and made himself the protector and the supreme head of the English Church, now called the *Anglican Church*. Besides these Churches, there are a great many other communities called Churches. But which of them is entitled to be called the Church of Jesus Christ? As salvation can only be obtained in "the true Church", Jesus Christ, who wishes all men to be saved, must certainly have endowed "the true Church" with certain marks by which it can easily be recognized. But what are those peculiar marks which distinguish

“the true Church” from all other false Churches? The distinctive marks are four—namely: Unity, Sanctity, Catholicity, and Apostolicity; or in other words, the Church of Jesus Christ must be One, Holy, Catholic, or Universal, and Apostolical.

Q. How is the Church one?

A. In being “one body and one fold”, animated by “one spirit”, under “one head” and “one Shepherd Jesus Christ, who is over all the Church” (*Eph.*, i. 4).

2. The Church is One”, because, in the first place, the faithful who compose it are “one body” and “one fold”, and though scattered through the whole universe, yet are united and banded together by the “one” spirit, being, as St. Paul says, “one body in Christ”. The spirit which “animates” the body of the Church is the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of Truth which guides its members and unites them together—that Spirit which Christ declared would abide with His Church till the consummation of the world. It is again “One”, because all its members are under “one head and one shepherd”—the Pope, Christ’s vicar on earth—and so can never be divided, cannot consist of jarring sects or separate communions, contradicting and condemning one another, but must be always “one body”, and must be perfectly united in one faith and one communion, and subject to one supreme Church authority.

3. Protestant Churches have no “one fold” nor “one shepherd”, for they constitute many societies and are placed under different heads. In Prussia the Protestant Church has for its head the King; in England it has the Queen; and in Scotland the heads vary according to the wishes of its various sects. It is in vain to look for unity amongst Protestants.

They have no unity, nor principle of unity. Their first and fundamental principle—private interpretation—is evidently a principle of disunion, leading inevitably to endless religious discord. And, consequently, they are divided into numberless sects, divided from each other in everything, except in opposing their true mother, the Catholic Church.

4. The Catholic Church, on the contrary, recognizes one only invisible Head, Jesus Christ, *Unus Dominus Jesus Christus*, represented on this earth by His vicar, the Pope, who is the visible Head of the Church. She is not divided into many sects, but is “one” undivided Society, and though her children, as St. Augustin says, are everywhere diffused, they are everywhere the same, united in one and the same faith, the same *yesterday, to-day, and for ever*.

Q. In what else is the Church One?

A. In all its members believing the same truths, having the same sacraments and sacrifice, and being under one visible Head on earth.

5. All the Catholics in the world have one and the same faith, they “believe the same truths”, for the same creeds that have been used through the different ages of Christianity, namely, the “Apostles’ Creed”, the “Nicene Creed”, the “Athanasian Creed”, and the “Creed of Pope Pius IV.”—drawn up in conformity with the definitions of the Council of Trent—are still everywhere recited and professed by Catholics to the strict letter. The same articles of Faith and Morality are taught in all our catechisms; the same Rule of Faith is admitted and proclaimed by all Catholics throughout the four quarters of the globe, from Ireland to Chili, and from Canada to India. The true Church has never changed her belief; she has always believed what

has been revealed by Jesus Christ to His Apostles. When she decides a point of faith, she declares nothing new, but only lays down what had always been revealed and always believed: *Persuasum semper fuit in Ecclesia*. Her Councils have ever confirmed the decisions of faith passed in previous Councils, and she has invariably cut off from her communion all those whose belief is different from hers.

6. The Protestant Church, on the contrary, has not "one and the same faith", but many contradictory doctrines. The faith professed by her in England is different from that professed by her in Scotland; and the faith professed by her in Switzerland is different from that professed by her in Prussia. In one Protestant Church, bishops and ordination by bishops are held to be necessary; in another they are considered of little use. Some of the bishops of England hold that baptism is necessary to salvation; while others reject it altogether. There is no unity of belief among them; and from their principle of private interpretation, they are deprived of all power of enforcing unity, and so all Protestant sects differ from one another in many essential points of belief.†

7. The true Church is "One", because "all its members have the same sacraments and sacrifice". All Catholics acknowledge and receive "the same sacraments". They are all baptized in the same saving waters, "one Baptism". They receive the same spirit in confirmation, "one Spirit". They sit down at the same table to eat the flesh of the Lamb in the Holy Eucharist. They seek for mercy and pardon at the same tribunal of Penance. When they are on the bed of death, the Priests of the Church visit them, and apply the same Unction to their failing members. All those who are charged by the Church to perform her holy ministrations, are

consecrated by the same Orders. In a word, the same Sacrament of Marriage sanctifies the union and propagation of the faithful. The same great "Sacrifice" of the Mass, and essentially in the same words, is everywhere offered; even the forms of the public service are everywhere essentially the same. The Catholic Church is strictly uniform on every essential matter of discipline, whether that regards the pastors or the people. The same great Feasts and Fasts are everywhere observed.

8. But the Protestant Church rejects a great many of the sacraments—some more, some less. They reject confirmation, penance, extreme unction, matrimony. The belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the blessed Eucharist, though adopted by some, is rejected by many. The Protestant Church is a "house divided against itself", not "one" but manifold. She exhibits the most absurd contrariety: England worships God in one way, Scotland in another, Geneva in a third, Prussia in a fourth, Sweden in a fifth, and even in the same country, wherever a few Protestants can be assembled, they will not agree as to the form of worship, but according to their particular views they adopt a form of service for themselves. And these different sects have often carried their differences about such matters to so great a height, as to excommunicate and anathematize each other, and scarce look upon one another as Christians. Thus, Luther, the great Apostle of the Reformation, anathematized Zuinglius for denying the Real Presence, and declared him to be totally possessed of Satan on that account. Ashamed, however, of the contemptible figure they make on this head, when compared with the unity of the Catholic Church, the modern shift they have fallen upon is the vain pretence that all these different parties, though holding such opposite and contradic-

tory doctrines, make up still but one Church of Christ ; as if Christ had revealed one thing to one party and the very reverse to another, and as if both their opposite tenets were equally the truths of God !

9. The true Church is “One”, “as being under one visible Head on earth”. It has but one sole Master, Jesus Christ, its invisible Head—“One Lord Jesus Christ”. He is represented here on earth by a visible Head, who is the Pope, His vicar, the successor of St. Peter, appointed by Christ to govern His Church : “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it”. Here we find St. Peter appointed by our Lord as the centre of unity. “That which holds me in the Church”, says St. Augustin, “is the succession of pastors from the Apostle St. Peter, to whom Jesus Christ intrusted the feeding of His sheep, thus giving him Episcopal jurisdiction”. All the Catholics in the world are bound together under one Head. The people are subject to their Priests ; the Priests are subject to their Bishops ; and the Bishops are appointed by, and subject to, the Pope, Peter’s lawful successor in the See of Rome.

But the Protestant Church is not one as to its head, for it has different heads. In England its head is the Queen ; in Prussia the King ; in other countries its head varies according to the whims of various sects. The Protestant Church is not then “the true Church”, because it is not the one sheepfold, under the government of one sole Pastor, “one fold, one shepherd”.†

Q. How is the Church holy ?

A. In its Founder, Jesus Christ, in its doctrine and sacraments, and in the number of its children, who have been eminent for holiness in all ages.

10. The Church, dear children, is holy "in its Founder, Jesus Christ". He, who is holiness itself, "loved the Church, and delivered Himself for it, that He might sanctify it, *cleansing* it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (*Eph.*, v. 26). Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Church without "spot or wrinkle", is God equally as His Father, and consequently infinitely holy. He is the source of all sanctity; all holiness proceeds from Him, as pure waters flow from an undefiled source.

11. The Church is holy "in its doctrine". Everything taught by the Church is holy, breathes holiness, and conduces to holiness. In support of the doctrine taught by the Church, Jesus Christ performed many miracles, such as restoring sight to the blind, healing the sick, and raising the dead to life. The doctrine of the Church is then true and holy, for God would not work miracles in proof of false doctrine, nor support error by the works of Omnipotence. Everything taught by the Church is true. She teaches her children to believe all that God has revealed, and to practise all that He has commanded. The morality preached by her leads to holiness, and renders man perfect. Fasting, mortification, unceasing prayer, self-denial, and a frequent reception of the sacraments—so earnestly recommended in the Scriptures—are enjoined and practised by the whole Church from the Pope down to the lowest member of Christ's mystical body.

12. But the ever-varying sects of Protestants teach doctrines at variance with each other, and so destructive of holiness, good order, and morality. Her belief, that Faith alone is necessary, and that good works are useless, takes away every motive to

avoid vice and practise virtue. But the whole body of the doctrine taught by the Catholic Church hangs together with the most perfect symmetry, like the stones in the arch of a bridge, every part supporting and supported by each other, that the smallest flaw or shadow of contradiction can never be found in it —an evident sign of its truth! And every article of her Faith is so holy in itself, and so conducive to true holiness, that she challenges her greatest adversaries to show the smallest stain in any part of what she really teaches.

13. In her “Sacraments”, too, she is holy; for they have been instituted by the God of all holiness, and are administered in the name of the three Persons of the Holy Trinity. The ceremonies connected with the Sacraments; the words made use of in their administration, breathe nothing but holiness. Baptism renders us holy by cleansing us from Original sin, consecrating us to God, and by adopting us in the number of His children. We are confirmed in holiness by the Sacrament of Confirmation, by which we receive the Holy Ghost. We receive an increase of sanctity by means of the blessed Eucharist, which unites us closely with Jesus Christ. Penance restores us to the state of sanctity when we have fallen off from that state by sin. Extreme Unction sanctifies our sufferings and sickness, when in our last moments that holy Sacrament is applied to us. Holy Orders sanctifies the Bishops and Priests, that they may sanctify the faithful. Matrimony sanctifies the union of man and wife. Those seven Sacraments are so many channels through which the graces that flow from the wounds of our Redeemer are conveyed to the souls of Catholics of every class, in every condition, and at every period of life, from the time they enter this world, until they surrender their souls into the hands of God. But the Protestant Church has no

such means of holiness, for that Church has rejected five of the Sacraments—the sources of grace. Even the two Sacraments which they still retain are by them reduced to empty forms, which neither give nor increase holiness.

14. The Catholic Church is holy “in the number of its children, who have been eminent for holiness in all ages”. She alone, of all Churches, can lay claim to multitudes of every class, from the king to the beggar, and from the Pope to the Deacon, whose great virtues have been the admiration of all who knew them, and have been frequently attested by God, by innumerable miracles wrought through their means and at their intercession. In the Catholic Church alone can be found men such as St. Augustin, St. Benedict, St. Dominic, St. Francis—the Founders of the religious orders which bear their names; St. Augustin of Canterbury, the introducer of the whole system of Catholicity into England; St. Gregory, the zealous assertor of the Papal Supremacy, and of other Catholic doctrines; St. Patrick, the Apostle of Ireland. Besides these, there are very many other saints of the Catholic Church whom all learned and candid Protestants freely admit to have been saints, from the extraordinary piety and sanctity of their lives. And, to come down to later times, where, except in the Catholic Church, can be found men endowed with such Christian courage and heroic virtue, as St. Charles Borromeo, St. Francis of Sales, St. Vincent of Paul, St. John Francis Regis, St. Alphonsus Liguori, and the countless numbers of other holy personages, of different countries, ranks, professions, and sexes, who have illustrated the Catholic Church by their extraordinary and unwearied labours in God’s service?

15. Besides her canonized saints, the Catholic Church has comprised, and still comprises, within her

pale, multitudes of other holy members. If we look into those holy retreats for religious, we shall find numbers of persons, of either sex, heroically practising the counsels as well as the commands of the Gospel ; and among them we shall find many who have exchanged large fortunes, and rank, and splendour, and worldly pleasures, for the poverty, humility, and restraint of a cloistered life, in order that they may give themselves solely to God and heaven. And if we descend from the holiness of canonized saints, and the sanctity of secluded and contemplative life, to the ordinary ranks of mankind, we shall still find, in the wide extent of the Catholic Church, that those who really know and follow their religion show forth to the world abundant and bright examples of all the moral, social, and religious virtues, and exhibit in their lives the genuine fruits of "holiness".

16. But in the Protestant Church, and the same may be said of the Greek Church, you will find no such fruits of holiness. In the Protestant calendar, where so many Catholic saints appear, you will not find any members of the Protestant Church recorded as saints. A single supernatural fact cannot be cited in confirmation of its doctrine. Not one individual member of its creed can be produced as distinguished for a holy life. What were even the so-called *Apostles* of the Reformation ? We find that Luther was the sport of his unbridled passions—pride, resentment, and lust ; that he was arrogant, abusive, seditious ; and that, by his own account, he was the scholar of Satan in an important article of his professed Reformation. We find that Carlstad, as another reformer describes him, was brutal and ignorant, void of piety and humanity, more a Jew than a Christian. We find that Zuinglius, as he himself confessed, was infamous in the sight of the churches for his incontinency. We find that Beza

was a promoter of rebellion, that he was intolerant, and that he was of most dissolute manners, as appears from his published *Epigrams*. Such were the chief Apostles of the Reformation. How different from Him whose envoys they professed themselves—from Him—who said: “Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart!” (*Matthew*, xi. 29). How different from those holy Apostles of Jesus, who lived and laboured “in much patience, in watchings, in fastings, in chastity, in sweetness, in charity unfeigned!” (ii. *Cor.* vi.). How different from St. Bernard, St. Francis, St. Bonaventure, St. Francis Xavier, declared by the *Apology* for the Confession of Augsburg, to be saints, and admitted by Baldens, Hackluit, and Tavernier, all rigid Lutherans and Calvinists—to be “eminent for holiness”, and for miracles performed in support of the true religion! †

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

FATHER BURKE ON THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

* Now, among all the things of the earth there is nothing that shows so highly and so emphatically the attributes of God as His holy Catholic Church, for she represents the unity of God in the unity of our doctrine of unquestioning obedience. We have unity of doctrine. We are two hundred millions, my friends, scattered all the world over. We find ourselves sometimes in communities, as for instance, in the great cities of New York and Brooklyn, where Catholics are numbered by hundreds of thousands. Sometimes we find ourselves in communities or nations, as in the green old mother land that bore me, when that whole nation—blessed be God!—is Catholic. Sometimes again we find ourselves broken up into small communities in the midst of our Protestant brethren and fellow-citizens, the Catholics only representing a unit in the community. You sometimes find a Catholic

family gone out to the far West, out on the bosom of the prairies, settled down in a little shanty on the banks of a little western river; but wherever you find them, whether in nations, in cities, in small communities, or individuals, if you find one Catholic, you find, personified in him, the certain faith of two hundred millions of men. Question one of them, and if he knows his catechism you have the response of all. Ask him and he will tell you what the two hundred millions will tell you if you have only time and patience to go through and ask every man among them, and you will find no difference of opinion or belief in their doctrines.

God, in His true Church, has welded together two hundred millions of intelligences, varying and dissenting in every other point. He has made them united in faith, as He Himself has said, "as one". In their obedience in like manner Catholics are one. Ask any Catholic in the world, and you have asked them all, who is the head of the Church, and the answer will be, "The Pope of Rome". Do you acknowledge him as the head of the bishops and people? Yes, in every single point. Even as the proud Egyptian pyramids, taking hold of the earth, covering acres of soil, sweeping aside and resisting the power and might of successive ages, yet still, tapering up to the summit, end in one single block of stone pointing to heaven; so the Catholic Church, spreading herself out and covering the whole world, in such strength that neither time, nor the world, nor hell, can destroy her; yet she tapers up toward God through the succession of the clergy, the clergy bearing their episcopacy, and the whole hierarchy of the Church terminating in one man, who is the head of all; the commander whose voice all obey, because that man represents Peter, and Peter represents Jesus Christ, the Head of the Catholic Church. And so she must remain for ever; ever growing in the faith of her children; ever growing in their devotion; ever renewing, like the eagle, from day to day, her divinely-infused strength and power; ever testing every system of philosophy; ever denouncing every form of error; ever proclaiming every form of law; and laboriously and patiently—the *Alma Mater*, bringing out with skilful and patient hand, in the confessional, on her altar, in all the influences of the sacraments—bringing out, in every individual soul that she touches, the divine and God-like image of Christ.

Such do we behold thee—such do I see thee, O royal mother! O royal mother! even as Paul at Tarsus beheld thee—thee whom Christ loved, and for whom He laid down His life, that He might present thee to Himself, a glorious

Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and perfect in thy sanctity. Such do I believe thee, as the prophet beheld thee, when he said: "Thou wast made of exceeding beauty, because of thy beauty which I behold in thee, saith the Lord". As such do I recognise thee, O mother, who hast begotten me by the simple act of Christ. As such do I recognise thee, O mighty influence, sanctifying all that thou dost approach. As such do I behold thee, with all the brightest intelligences of the world, in times past and in times present, bowing down before thy altars, and accepting thy message of divine truth. As such do I see thee, when, turning from the past, I look into the future, and behold thee, with a crown of supreme and celestial beauty, shining in the unity of thy faith, and resplendent in the glory of thy sanctity; the crowning blessing of this glorious Western land, that, in these latter days of the world's existence, will put forth all her strength and all her intelligence to uphold the glory of Christ and of His Church.

We know that everything else may perish, but we know that she must remain: we have the evidence of it in her history. She may perish in this nation or in that; but she springs up, by the inevitable destiny of her being, to new life elsewhere. She perished many centuries ago, in the very cradle in which she was founded—in Palestine—in the Oriental countries, but she took possession of Western Europe.

THE PROTESTANT CHURCH WANTING IN UNITY.

† Protestants agree not in opinion with regard even to the most essential points of faith. The Lutherans admit one sole person in Jesus Christ; Calvin and Beza, like Nestorius, admit two. Calvin maintained that man has no free will, and that God is the author of sin; the Lutherans pronounce that doctrine as damnable. Luther maintained that Christ, as man, is present every place; Zuinglius and Calvin deny it. Luther admitted the sacraments of Baptism, the blessed Eucharist, and Penance; Calvin rejected Penance, and admitted Holy Orders, denied by Luther. Zuinglius rejected both Penance and Holy Orders. Upon this subject, Dudethius, a Protestant divine, thus writes to his friend, Theodore Beza:—"What kind of people are our Protestants, straggling to and fro, and carried about with every wind of

doctrine, sometimes to this side and sometimes to that? You may, perhaps, know what their sentiments are to-day, but you never can certainly tell what they will be to-morrow. In what article of religion do those churches agree, which have cast off the Bishop of Rome? Examine all from top to bottom, and you will scarce find a single thing confirmed by them which is not immediately condemned by another as wicked doctrine". "They know not", says Jean Jacques Rousseau, "what they believe, nor what they say, nor what they think. Ask them if Jesus Christ be God, and they will not dare give you an answer. Ask them what are the mysteries in which they believe, and they cannot tell you. No one can tell what they believe, or what they do not believe. The only way they have of supporting their faith, is that of attacking the faith of others".

ST. JEROME'S LETTER TO POPE DAMASUS, ON THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH.

* A little before St. Jerome left his desert, he wrote two letters to consult St. Damasus, who had been raised to the Papal throne in 336, what course he ought to adopt to a subject very much discussed at that time. In the first, he says: "I am joined in communion with your Holiness, that is, with the chair of St. Peter; upon that rock I know the Church is built. Whoever eats the Lamb out of that house is a profane person. Whoever is not in the ark shall perish in the flood. Whoever gathers not with you, scatters; that is, he who is not Christ's belongs to Anti-Christ. The Church (at Antioch) being divided into three parts, each would needs draw me to itself. All the time I cease not to cry out: 'Whoever is united to the chair of Peter is mine'"

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Why are the principal religious communities called churches?
2. What do you mean by saying that the Church of Christ is one?
3. Can you assign some reasons for saying the Protestant Church is not one?

4. Does the Catholic Church acknowledge but one supreme head on earth?
5. Besides being one body and one fold, is the Catholic Church one in other respects?
6. Is the faith of the Protestant Church the same everywhere?
7. Is the Catholic Church one in her sacraments and discipline?
8. Is the Protestant Church one in her sacraments and discipline?
9. Is the Catholic Church one in any other way?
10. In what way is the Church holy in its founder?
11. How is the Church holy in its doctrine?
12. How does the doctrine of Protestants differ from that of Catholics?
13. How is the Church holy in its Sacraments?
14. Who were those remarkable for sanctity in the Catholic Church?
15. Have others besides her saints been remarkable for holiness?
16. Describe the character of the first so-called Reformers.

PRACTICE.

1. Always uphold every point of belief taught by the Church, and speak with respect of every one of the truths decided by her.
2. That you may prove yourself a true member of the holy Church, let all your works and words be seasoned with wisdom and holiness.
3. Ever revere the pious practices adopted and sanctioned by the Catholic Church.

PRAYER.

We give Thee thanks, one only God, for adopting us in the number of the children of the Church, and for maintaining us in the true Faith. May we always live in harmony and peace, and edify each other by the regularity and holiness of our lives, that we may do honour to the one holy Church in which we have been born, and in which we hope to breathe forth our last sigh. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MARKS OF THE CHURCH CONTINUED.

Q. How is the Church Catholic, or universal?

A. Because it has subsisted in every age, and is to last to the end of time, and will be spread throughout all nations (*Matt.*, xxviii., and *Rom.*, x.).

1. According to the Scriptures the true Church must be "Catholic or universal" in three ways: Universal as to *time*, Universal as to *place*, and Universal as to *doctrine*. That she must be Universal as to *time*, we learn from the prophecy of Isaiah, in which he says: "Upon thy walls, O Jerusalem! I have appointed watchmen—all the day and all the night; they shall never hold their peace" (*Isaiah*, lxii.). Jesus Christ confirms this prophecy in speaking to His Apostles, when He says: "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you for EVER" (*John*, xiv. 16). And in the commission given by Him to His Apostles, He lays down these three marks as essential qualities of His Church. "Going, therefore, teach ye *all nations*; . . . teaching them to observe *all things*, whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you *all days*, even to the consummation of the world" (*Matt.*, xxviii. 19, 20). In this passage we have the express words of Christ Himself, attesting that His Church must be Catholic, as to *time*, *place*, and *doctrine*.

2. But the Roman Catholic Church *alone* possesses, as her undivided property, the glorious character of being the Church of *all times*, and she is the

only Church on earth that can be visibly traced back through every age to the time of Christ. In her communion *alone*, great numbers of holy Apostolic men have abounded in "every age", who, leaving all they possessed, or could expect in the world, and burning with zeal for the conversion of souls to God, have dedicated themselves to carry the light of the Gospel to those who "sat in darkness and in the shadow of death", and to bring heathen nations to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. In the third century Catholicity was extended through the whole known world; and in every age since that period the Church has progressed with amazing rapidity. "In every age" she has sent forth zealous missionaries to preach her faith to the most uncivilized nations, and her voice is ever heard announcing the doctrine of her Divine Master. Enlightened and learned Protestants, equally as Catholics, bear witness to her universality as to *time*.

3. "The history of the Roman Catholic Church", says Babington Macaulay, "joins together the two great ages of civilization. *No other institution* is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when cameleopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre. The proudest royal houses are but of yesterday, when compared with the line of Supreme Pontiffs. That line we trace in an unbroken series from the Pope who crowned Napoleon, in the nineteenth century, to the Pope who crowned Pepin in the eighth; and far beyond the time of Pepin, the august dynasty extends, till it is lost in the twilight of fable. The republic of Venice came next in antiquity. But the republic of Venice was modern when compared with the Papacy; and the republic of Venice is gone, and the Papacy remains. The Papacy remains, not in decay, not a mere an-

tique, but full of life and vigour. The Catholic Church is still sending forth to the further ends of the world missionaries as zealous as those who landed in Kent with Augustin, and still confronting hostile kings with the same spirit with which she confronted Attila. The number of her children is greater than in any former age...Nor do we see any sign which indicates that the term of her long dominion is approaching. She saw the commencement of all the governments and of all the ecclesiastical establishments that now exist in the world; and we feel no assurance that she is not destined to see the end of them all. She was great and respected before the Saxon had set foot on Britain, before the Frank had passed the Rhine, when Grecian eloquence still flourished at Antioch, when idols were still worshipped in the Temple of Mecca; and she may still exist in undiminished vigour when some traveller from New Zealand shall, in the midst of a vast solitude, take his stand on a broken arch of London Bridge, to sketch the ruins of St. Paul's".*

4. The *Protestant Church* is not "Universal" as to time, for before the time of Luther she had no existence. Four hundred years ago, nothing was known of the Protestant Church. A Church is composed of pastors and people, teaching and believing certain doctrines, and no such body holding Protestant doctrines was known in the world for fifteen hundred years after Christ died. But the "Catholic Church", as we have before seen, has a right to that glorious title; for she *alone* connects herself with the ages that are gone, and will connect herself with the ages yet to come, till time shall be no more. All human institutions have appeared and vanished for ever. One Institution alone,

framed and preserved by the wisdom and power of God, has withstood all the ravages of time, and still remains a standing miracle of God's Providence. Through eighteen centuries and more has the Catholic Church "flourished" in the accomplished promises of her divine Founder; and to the end of time will she last, for His divine promises cannot fail. "Go teach all nations; I am with you to the *end* of the world" (*Matt.*, xxviii. 20).

5. The true Church, as to *place*, must be "Catholic or Universal", for the Lord thus speaks to His Apostles:—"And ye shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even the *uttermost parts of the earth*" (*Acts*, i. 8). But the Catholic Church alone can lay claim to that title, because it is spread and "will be spread throughout all nations". From her very beginning she has always been extending the sacred standard of the Gospel. By her *alone* were all the heathen nations converted, that have as yet been ever brought into the Christian faith. She is the Church of all nations, for there is not a Christian nor even a Pagan nation, that does not by noble monuments attest her presence and greatness. The Catholic religion, notwithstanding the many persecutions raised against her, is still the religion of the greater part of Europe. It is the religion of Italy, of France, of Spain, of Portugal, of Belgium, of Piedmont, of most of the Swiss cantons, of the islands of the Mediterranean; of far the greater part of Ireland, Poland, Bohemia, Germany, and of the neighbouring provinces. In other kingdoms and states in which it is not the established religion—as in England, Scotland, Sweden, Denmark, Holland—the Catholic Church is every day making rapid strides, and gaining numerous converts.

6. The whole vast continent of South America

may be said to be Catholic ; the same may be said of the Empire of Mexico, and the surrounding countries of North America. Catholicity is triumphant in every part of the United States of America. Canada, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, are chiefly Catholic. In the various countries of Asia, the Gospel is spread far and wide, and Catholic missionaries are every year leaving the shores of Ireland to announce the Word of God to the countries along the Mississippi and the Ganges. In Egypt, Ethiopia, Algiers, Tunis, and other parts of Africa, there are numerous congregations of Catholics established and organized under their Pastors. Australia is every day becoming more and more Catholic, and will before many years contain an immense Catholic population.*

7. Through all these various parts of the habitable globe are found spread innumerable persons who, though differing in climate and character, in language and manners and interests, yet are all united in one Faith ; and, under the same Ecclesiastical government, form together one "Catholic Church". "Her spiritual ascendancy", says Macaulay, "extends over the vast countries which lie between the plains of the Missouri and Cape Horn, countries which, a century hence, may not improbably contain a population as large as that which now inhabits Europe. The numbers of her communion are certainly not fewer than a hundred and fifty millions ;" and it will be difficult to show that all the other Christian sects united amount to a hundred and twenty millions". Yes, *everywhere* her Incense ascends ; *everywhere* her Sacraments are administered ; *everywhere* her pure Sacrifice is offered. To her alone did the prophet speak when he said : "I will give the nations for thine inheritance, and the ends of the earth for thy possession".

* The total number of Catholics in the world is 254,655,000

8. *The Protestant Church is not "Universal"* either as to numbers or to *place*. Even the Greek Church is before her in numbers ; and she cannot on this head bear a comparison with the Catholic Church. According to the latest accounts, the number of Protestants in the world is 48,985,000 ; the total number of Greeks is 56,360,000 ; whilst the Catholics are 254,655,000. The Catholics, then, are nearly six to one to all demominations of Protestants. But if we take each Protestant Church by itself, as for example the Church of England, or the Presbyterian Church, we shall find that the Catholics are to the Church of England Protestants, as thirty-six to one ; and to the Presbyterian Church, as sixty-five to one. It is, then, the highest folly to bestow on any of these Protestant sects the title of "Catholic or Universal". The Protestant Church cannot be called "Universal" as to place, for Protestants are nearly confined to a small corner of the earth, as will appear from the *Scientific Miscellany* :

	Europe.	Asia.	Africa.	America.	Oceania.
Catholics,	154,444,000	40,000,000	12,400,000	34,110,000	3,450,000
Protestants,	39,675,000	50,000	10,000	9,150,000	50,000

These numbers are a clear proof that the Protestant Church is not the Church of all nations ; she is not even the Church of any one nation, no, not even exclusively of one parish, on the face of the earth.*

9. The Roman Catholic Church *alone* is "Universal" as to *doctrine*, for *everywhere* her teaching is the same. Her teaching in one country does not differ from her teaching in another. The principles inculcated and the doctrines taught by her in Europe, are the same as those inculcated and taught in America. Like

* See Controversial Catechism, by the Rev. S. Keenan.

her divine Founder, her doctrine is the same *yester-day*, and *to-day*, and *for ever*. She alone can lay claim to Catholicity, and the term peculiarly belongs to her. No other Church will be recognized by that name. "Heretics", says St. Augustin, "have made every exertion to obtain that name, yet they have never been able to succeed. If a stranger, on entering a city, were to ask, where is the Catholic Church? no heretic would dare to point out his heretical assembly. . . Heretics and schismatics, whether they will or not, when speaking of the Catholic Church, with strangers or with their own people, call her by the name of "Catholic"; for they would not be understood if they did not call her by the name by which all the world calls her"—*Contra. Ep. Fund.* "If", says St. Cyril, "you go into any city, do not ask merely, *where is the church?* but ask *which* is the *Catholic Church?* because this title belongs alone to our Holy Mother". "Christian", says St. Pacian, "is my name, *Catholic* is my surname, by the former I am called, by the latter I am distinguished".

10. The Protestant Church cannot claim the title of *Catholicity* as to doctrine; for that Church has no fixed doctrine. What is taught by her to-day is denied on to-morrow; what is inculcated by her in one country is rejected in another. In the words of the Apostle, she is "carried about by every wind of doctrine", presenting one huge, confused mass of inconsistencies, incongruities, and absurdities. The Protestant Church is not, then, "Universal", either as to *time*, *place*, or *doctrine*, and so cannot be the true Church. The Catholic Church alone possesses this mark of universality under these three heads; for it teaches everywhere the same *doctrine*, because it has subsisted in *every age*, and is to last to the *end of time*, and will be spread throughout *all nations*". †

Q. How is the Church Apostolical?

A. Because it was founded by Christ and His Apostles, and was governed by them and their lawful successors, and because it "never ceased, and never will cease, to teach their doctrine" (*Eph.*, ii. 20).

11. The last of the four marks of the true Church is **APOSTOLICITY**; for any Church pretending to be the true Church of Christ must be able to trace her "doctrine", her "orders", and her "mission" to the Apostles of Christ. By the term "Apostolic Church" is meant that the Church of Christ was founded by "the Apostles", and received her "doctrine", the "orders" of her priesthood, and the "mission" of her Pastors from them at the beginning, and that she must continue to the end of the world professing the same Faith and doctrine. As, during all the time the Church has existed, there must have been true Pastors "for the perfecting the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (*Eph.*, iv.), these Pastors must have been lawfully sent; "for no man", as St. Paul assures us, "taketh the honour of the priesthood upon himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron was" (*Heb.*, v. 4); much less can any man possess the powers of the priesthood, unless they be given to him by those who have the power to give them.

12. Nor can those who have these Priestly orders or powers lawfully exercise them, unless they be authorized and commissioned to do so, by being lawfully sent. Thus, the Apostles received their mission from Christ, who said to them: "As my Father sent Me, so I also send you" (*John*, xx.). In like manner the Apostles sent others to succeed themselves, with power also to send others after them, as St. Paul and Barnabas were sent by the

Pastors of the Church at Antioch; and as, again, St. Paul sent Timothy and Titus. In this manner each succeeding generation of Pastors was sent by the preceding, from Christ to the present time; and, one generation sending the other, did it by the power which Christ bestowed upon the Apostles at the beginning. The only door, then, by which true Pastors can enter the fold of Christ, are "orders and mission" received from the chief Pastors of the Church, according to the words of St. Paul to Titus: "For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and shouldst ordain priests in every city, as I also appointed thee" (*Titus*, i. 5).

13. But of all Churches, the Roman Catholic Church alone is truly "Apostolical" as to "doctrine, orders, and mission". She alone has always preserved the sacred "doctrine" delivered originally to her by the Apostles. In the Catholic Church the same "doctrine" is taught now which was taught in every age and country since the time of Christ. She professes in the nineteenth century, what she professed in the eighteenth; and the "doctrine" professed by her in the eighteenth is the very same as that held by her in the seventeenth, and in every preceding century. Let her enemies charge her, if they will, with a change in her "doctrine": she defies them; for her history and her writers attest and prove that what she teaches is no other than what had been taught by the Apostles. But the Protestant Church is not "Apostolical" as to "doctrine", for she has no fixed principles. Her teaching ever varies. To-day she denies what she professed on yesterday. Her teaching in one country differs from her teaching in another. Her Creeds are contradictory of each other; and, whatever they be, they were unknown for fifteen hundred years after

Christ ; for during that time the Protestant Church had no existence at all.†

14. The Catholic Church *alone* is “Apostolical” as to “orders”; for they can be traced from Priest to Bishop, and from Bishop to Pope, through every age back to the time that the Church “was founded by Christ and His Apostles”. An uninterrupted succession of Catholic Pastors has existed from the time of the Apostles. From Pius IX., who now sits in the Papal chair, we can easily trace back to St. Peter, who first held possession of it. The many particular Churches united in communion with the See of Rome can trace back their Bishops to the Apostolic men who founded them; and it can be proved that these in turn received their “mission” from the Apostles, or the successors of the Apostles. “I am kept in the Church”, says St. Augustin, “by the succession of Prelates from St. Peter, to whom the Lord committed the care of His sheep, down to the present Bishop”. Tertullian argues in the same manner, and challenges certain heretics in these terms: “Let them produce the origin of their Churches, let them display the succession of their Bishops, so that the first of them may appear to have been ordained by an Apostle, or by an Apostolic man”. He then gives a list of the Pontiffs in the Roman See, and concludes as follows: “Let heretics produce anything like this”—*De Præscrip.* The uninterrupted succession of lawful Pastors—Pastors with all the sacred Orders—is so palpable a truth, that the Church of England acknowledges that whatever she has of Priestly orders, she received from the Roman Catholic Church, in whom alone they have been transmitted to the present time, without interruption, from the Apostles.

15. As for the *Protestant Church*, they have no Orders at all, nor do they—at least many of them—

so much as pretend to it. The ministers of the Calvinistic churches, and many other so-called reformed churches, are mere laymen. The Church of England lays claim indeed to Orders, but her claim has no certain foundation, because she has never proved, nor can she, that the first Protestant Bishop of the Church of England was himself validly ordained or consecrated, and because she had not in use the true form of ordination during a hundred and twelve years. The plain truth of the matter is, that she had no being at all till about the middle of the sixteenth century; and so it is utterly impossible that she can trace her "Orders" to the times of the Apostles.

16. The Roman Catholic Church alone is "Apostolical" as to "mission", because she has been "governed by the Apostles and their lawful successors", up to the present time. She existed in every age, from the Apostles to the present day, without the slightest change or innovation in her faith. Her Pastors can trace their "mission" from Priest to Bishop, and from Bishop to Pope, through every century, until they descend to the Apostles, who received their "mission" from Christ. The list of Popes, from Pius IX. to St. Peter, is one continued chain without the slightest gap or break. The same can be said of all the Sees in the world in communion with the Church of Rome; so that we can point to an uninterrupted succession of Bishops ruling, teaching, and adorning every age and clime. Hence every Catholic Pastor can, with truth, thus address his flock: "The word of God which I announce to you, and the holy Sacraments which I dispense to you, I am QUALIFIED to announce and dispense by such a Catholic Bishop, who was consecrated by such another Catholic Bishop, and so on in a series which reaches to the Apostles themselves; and I am authorized to preach and minister to you by such a Prelate, who received

authority for this purpose from the successor of St. Peter in the Apostolic See of Rome".

17. No *Protestant minister* can, with any reason, address his flock in such language; for his Church is not "Apostolical", not having derived her "mission" from the Apostles or their successors. If "*ordination*" be necessary, "*mission*" is no less necessary, as is evident from Christ's commission to His Apostles: "As the Father hath sent Me I also send you". Who *sent* the first reformed ministers—Luther, Calvin, Beza, Bucer, and the other leaders of the Reformation? Who commissioned them to preach? They cannot answer, God; for not one of them ever wrought a *single* miracle to prove their being sent; and their *lives* were not those of men whom God would select for His holy work. Were they *sent* by the Apostles? No; for they were fifteen hundred years too late to have any connexion with the Apostles. Were they *sent* by the Catholic Church? No: they surely could not derive their "*mission*" from the very Church against which they raised the standard of rebellion. The Catholic Church could not commission them to preach against herself, and give a commission to teach error, directly opposed to her own Creed. On what, therefore, could they ground their authority for preaching? They gave no proof of an *extraordinary mission* from God; and as no Protestant Church existed before Luther's time, from which they could receive a commission, therefore they had no *ordinary mission*. And certainly if the first "*Reformers*" had no "*mission*", either *ordinary* or *extraordinary*, all their *successors* cannot, from that *succession*, claim a "*mission*", as it was not originally possessed. Therefore they are missionless intruders, who are disqualified from preaching, according to the words of St. Paul: "How shall they preach unless they be sent?"

(Rom., x.), and, therefore, they are to be numbered among those *thieves* and *robbers* mentioned by St. John, who enter the sheepfold *not by the door*, but climb up *another way*.

Q. What conclusion do you draw from what has been said?

A. That the Protestant Church is false, and that the Catholic Church is the only true one.

18. As the Protestant Church does not derive her "doctrine, orders, or mission" from the Apostles, she then cannot be the true Church ; for, according to Scripture, the true Church must be Apostolical in all these three ways. And as the Roman Catholic Church, as has been proved, is clearly Apostolical as to her "doctrine, orders, and mission", she must necessarily be the true Church of Christ.‡

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

IRELAND PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL.

* Looking at the general state of things at this day, I desiderate for a school of the Church, if an additional school is to be granted to us, a more central position than Oxford has to show. Since the days of Alfred and the first Henry, the world has grown from the west and south of Europe into four or five continents, and I look for a city less inland than that old sanctuary, and a country closer upon the highway of the seas. I look towards a land both old and young—old in its Christianity, young in the promise of its future ; a nation which received grace before the Saxon came to Britain, and which has never quenched it ; a Church which comprehends in its history the rise and fall of Canterbury and York ; which Augustine and Paulinus found, and Pole and Fisher left behind them. I contemplate a people which had a long night, and will have an inevitable day. I am turning my eyes towards a hundred years to come, and I dimly see the island I am gazing on become the road of passage and union

between two hemispheres, and the centre of the world. I see its inhabitants rival Belgium in populousness, France in vigour, and Spain in enthusiasm ; and I see England taught by advancing years to exercise in its behalf that good sense which is her characteristic towards every one else. The capital of that prosperous and hopeful land is situated in a beautiful bay, and near a romantic region, and in it I see a flourishing University, which for a while had to struggle with fortune, but which, when its first founders and servants were dead and gone, had success far exceeding their anxieties. Thither, as to a sacred soil—the home of their fathers, and the fountain-head of their Christianity—students are flocking from east, west, and south ; from America, and Australia, and India ; from Egypt and Asia Minor, with the ease and rapidity of a locomotion not yet discovered, and last, though not least, from England—all speaking one tongue, all owning one faith, all eager for one large true wisdom ; and thence, when their stay is over, going back again to carry “peace to men of good will” over all the earth.—*Dr. Newman.*

THE CATHOLICITY OF THE TRUE CHURCH.

† Now I ask you, where is this promise of unity and Catholicity fulfilled, except in the Catholic Church ? There are two hundred millions and more of us scattered all the world over. There are Catholics in every land, speaking every tongue under Heaven. Take any one instructed Catholic—I don’t care of what nation ; I don’t care in what clime you find him—take that one instructed Catholic, question him as to his faith, and in that man you will find the faith of the two hundred millions that are scattered over the world. In the word of that one man you find a unit, the representation of the belief which rests in the mind of every Catholic throughout the world, just as it is spoken by the lips of every other one. I ask you to compare this with the miserable multitude of opinions on the most important subjects that are found outside the Church. Take any one form or denomination of religion—take Protestantism, or any other form of religious belief outside the Catholic Church ; have they any assurance, or are they able to give you any assurance, that their doctrines of to-day will be the doctrines of next year ? No. And the proof lies here—that the doctrines of this year were not the doctrines of twenty years ago.

What is this but changing ? Nay, more : no sooner was the standard of schism raised, three hundred years ago, in

the Church, than very single leader of the Protestant movement broke off from his fellow man, and established a religious sect for himself. Names that were never before heard : "Zuinglians", "Lutherans", "Calvinists", "Antinomians", "Anabaptists", and so on ; until, in our own day, the last, and the ultimate, and the logical residue of Protestantism has subsided into a form of religion which is "pure Deism"; acknowledges that there is a God; stops there; and asserts that there is no other dogma. Nay, a Protestant Bishop of England, a few years ago, made use of these words : "It is the proudest boast of our Church of England that she has no dogma"; that is to say, no fixed form of opinion. I do not say these words, nor any words, nor do I think in my mind any thought—much less express it—which would be painful or disrespectful to any man; but I ask you, my friends, are not these the facts? Are they not there before your eyes? In the Catholic Church any one instructed Catholic, who knows his religion, represents the doctrine of the Church. You never heard of those in the Catholic Church contradicting each other in matters of doctrine or belief. You never heard of strange or unheard-of propositions propounded from a Catholic pulpit. You may search the history of eighteen hundred and seventy-two years, and you will find the Catholic Church always preaching, always speaking clearly, emphatically, fearlessly, on every question; never refusing to give an answer, when she is called upon, on any question of faith or morals. After eighteen hundred and seventy-two years, the student of history turns over page after page of historic record, to all the enunciations of the Church, in her Bishops, in her Popes, in her Councils; and no where can he find a single instance, of a single line, in which the Church taught a single contradiction to herself, in which the Church ever denied one tittle or iota of her previous doctrine, or ever changed one single feature of her Divine teaching. We, therefore, are forced to believe that, if consistency be a proof of truth, if unity be the soul of truth—the sign of truth wherever it is found—that consistency, and that unity, are to be found in the Catholic Church.—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O. P.*

LUTHER AND MELANCTHON ON THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

† In his treatise, *De Missa Privata*, Luther declares that the Catholic is the true Church—the pillar and ground of truth. In the same treatise he says, "I confess that, under the Papacy, are many good things—nay, all that is good in

Christianity ; the true Scripture, true Baptism, the true Sacrament of the altar, true keys for the remission of sins, true office of Preaching. Nay, I say that in Popery is true Christianity, *even the very kernel of Christianity*". Melancthon, Luther's favourite co-operator in the work of reformation, acknowledged the Catholic Church to be the true Church ; and when he was consulted by his Catholic mother about changing her religion, he advised her to remain as she was, adding to his counsel these remarkable truths : " Our religion is, indeed, the more plausible, but *yours the more secure*". The Protestant Archbishop Laud says, " I grant the Roman Church to be a true Church ; for so learned Protestants have done before me, and truth cannot deny it".

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. How can you show that the Church must be universal ?
2. Can the Catholic Church lay claim to universality ?
3. What does Macaulay say of the Roman Catholic Church ?
4. Is the Protestant Church universal as to time ?
5. How do you prove that the Catholic Church is universal as to place ?
6. Mention the different countries in which the Catholic religion prevails.
7. What does Macaulay say of the spread of the Catholic religion ?
8. What are the respective numbers of the Catholic and Protestant Churches throughout the world ?
9. Is the Catholic Church universal as to doctrine ?
10. Can the Protestant Church be said to be universal as to doctrine ?
11. What is required that a Church should be Apostolical ?
12. Prove from Scripture that the ministers of the Word of God must be sent.
13. Show that the Catholic Church *alone* is Apostolical as to doctrine.
14. Is the Catholic Church Apostolical as to Orders ?
15. Can the Protestant Church lay claim to Apostolicity as to Orders ?
16. Is the Catholic Church Apostolical as to mission ?

17. Is the Protestant Church Apostolical as to mission ? and why not ?

18. What follows from what has been said of the Catholic and Protestant Churches?

PRACTICE.

1. Let your obedience to the true Church be such as to afford proof that you sincerely believe in her divine origin.

2. Never forget the words of St. Cyprian, that " he who has not the Church for his mother, cannot have God for his Father".

3. Let your conduct under all circumstances be such as to give edification to Protestants.

PRAYER.

We give Thee thanks, O Lord ! for having hitherto preserved us from the snares of the emissaries of error ; and we now firmly promise that, to the end of our lives, we shall persevere in the true faith, and never allow ourselves to be seduced from our allegiance to our mother Church, either by threats or promises. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

ON THE ROMAN CHURCH AND THE SUPREMACY OF
ST. PETER AND HIS SUCCESSORS.

Q. Why do you call the Church Roman ?

A. Because the visible Head of the Church is Bishop of Rome ; and because St. Peter and his successors fixed their See in Rome.

1. The Catholic Church is called " Roman", be-

cause it is at Rome that the Pope, who is “the visible Head of the Church”, has fixed his See; and because all the other particular Catholic Churches in the world are united with the See of Rome, as their common mother and head. She is the centre of all other Catholic Churches. She is placed in the midst of them, like a firm and unshaken pillar on which the torch of truth continually burns, enlightening the faithful, and summoning them to unity, truth, and uniform rule. It was at Rome that St. Peter laid that foundation which he afterwards cemented with his blood; it was there that he governed the whole Church, as its established Head, appointed to that office by Jesus Christ, and acknowledged as such by the other Apostles. From St. Peter’s time every succeeding Head of the Church was Bishop of Rome, and, seated in the chair of Peter, governed the universal Church as its Sovereign Pontiff, enjoying a primacy of honour and jurisdiction. In the fourteenth century, it is true, the Popes resided at Avignon, in France; but they did not cease, on that account, to be the Bishops of Rome and the heirs of St. Peter. Rome is, indeed, the Capital of the Christian world, and justly is it called the Eternal City; for it shall never cease to be the centre of Catholic unity and the See of the successor of St. Peter.

Q. Who is the visible Head of the Church?

* A. The Pope, who is Christ’s Vicar on earth, and supreme visible Head of the Church?

2. Although Jesus Christ is the invisible Supreme Head of the Church—for God “hath put all things under His feet, and hath made Him head over all the Church, which is His body” (*Eph.*, i. 22), yet He has been pleased to appoint another under Himself

to be His “Vicar upon earth”, and chief Pastor among men, and “visible Head of the Church”, who is called Pope. Christ’s Vicar is called “the Pope”, a word signifying Father, because he is the common spiritual Father of all Christians. He is, too, called Sovereign Pontiff, because he is superior to all other Pontiffs or Bishops, not only as to honour, but also as to jurisdiction, and because he exercises supreme authority in the Church. He is called Most Holy Father, the universal Bishop of the Church, the Vicar of Christ, the Pastor of pastors, the Judge of judges, the head and principal of the whole Episcopate. These, and a great many other glorious titles, conferred upon the Pope by the Holy Fathers, the Councils, and by Ecclesiastical writers, point out to us the high respect and deep veneration in which the Bishop of Rome—the lawful successor of St. Peter—was held at all times and in all countries. In his Bulls and Apostolic letters, the Pope signs himself “the Servant of the servants of God—*Servus servorum Dei*”, in order to set us a pattern of humility. St. Gregory the Great, who mounted the chair of St. Peter in 590, was the first Pope who adopted this humble title; and his reason for styling himself the “Servant of the servants of God”, was to show his disapprobation of the haughty title assumed by John, Patriarch of Constantinople, who called himself “universal Bishop”.

Q. Was not the title of Pope and Vicar of Christ given to the Bishops in the early ages of the Church?

A. Yes; the annals of the Church tell us so.

3. In the first ages of the Church, the name “Pope” was given to every Bishop, and even to every simple Priest;* but the third Council of Car-

* F. Perrone.

thage prevented the assumption of this title by any one except the Bishop of Rome. Bishops, however, retained the title of Vicars and Vicegerents of Jesus Christ; and in reality they are so; for in the exercise of their holy ministry, and in the government of their respective dioceses, each holds the place of Jesus Christ, as Priest, as Pontiff, as Doctor, as Legislator. They are, as St. Paul says, "ambassadors for Jesus Christ, God exhorting the faithful by their mouth". St. Paul calls them, too, "God's coadjutors". But the Pope alone is the Vicar of Jesus Christ, "as Supreme visible Head of the Church", and as the Pastor of the whole flock. The entire world is his Diocese, and all the faithful—no matter what their rank and dignity be—are subject to him.

Q. To whom does the Pope succeed as visible Head of the Church?

A. To St. Peter, who was chief of the Apostles, Christ's Vicar on earth, and first Pope and Bishop of Rome.

4. "As visible Head of the Church", the Pope is successor to St. Peter; for there has been an uninterrupted succession of Chief Pastors in the See of Rome, from St. Peter—whom Christ made the head of His whole flock—to his present successor, Pope Pius IX. The succession of Chief Pastors in the chair of Peter was kept up in every century, from the first to the nineteenth. We can trace back, in one unbroken line, the succession of popes to St. Peter, and tell with the greatest accuracy the year in which each Pope ascended the chair of the Chief Apostle. St. Peter was the "first Pope and first Bishop of Rome"; for, after having preached in Jerusalem, and after having presided for seven years over the Church of Antioch, leaving St. Ignatius in

his place, he left that city, came to Rome, the capital of the empire, and there fixed his See. And that renowned city—the seat of the sciences, the great entrepot of trade and commerce, the great storehouse of error and superstition, the huge temple of false gods and goddesses—became the Church of St. Peter, the palladium of truth, and the seat of the religion of Jesus Christ. Having entered that fortress of impiety and superstition, he at once preached to the citizens Jesus Christ crucified. He announced this wonderful mystery first to the Jews who lived there, whose Apostle he was in a special way; then he addressed himself to the Gentiles, and formed a Church composed of both.

5. According to Eusebius, St. Peter held the See of Rome twenty-five years; though during that time he was often absent, performing his Apostolical functions in other countries. He entered Rome in the year of Christ 40, and after having remained there for a considerable time, he set out for the East. He soon returned to Rome; but, together with St. Paul, was banished from it by Claudius in the year 49, on account of some tumults raised there by the Jews against the Christians; but they were soon allowed to return. St. Peter went again to the East, and in 51 was present at the General Council, held at Jerusalem by the Apostles, where, in a discourse, he proved that the Gentile converts should not be bound by the Jewish ceremonies. After the Council of Jerusalem, he went to Antioch, where he ate promiscuously with the Gentile converts, without observing the Jewish distinction of “unclean meats”. Lactantius mentions that St. Peter returned to Rome a few years before his martyrdom, in the reign of the Emperor Nero. There is no doubt but St. Peter preached the Gospel over all Italy, and likewise in other provinces of the West, before his final return.

to Rome. England, among other places, lays claim to the happiness of having been visited by him. Several triumphs over the devil prepared St. Peter for his last crown, that of martyrdom in the city of Rome.

6. To give a clear view of his last glorious conflict, we must introduce the last adventure of his celebrated antagonist, Simon Magus. As we mentioned in a previous chapter, Simon had gained a great reputation in Rome by his magical performances. He promised the Emperor Nero, who was infatuated with the mysteries of the black art, that he would fly in the air—thus pretending to imitate the ascension of Christ. When he raised himself aloft, St. Peter and St. Paul commenced praying, and at once the magical impostor fell down, broke his leg, and died a few days after. St. Ambrose says, that the resentment of the tyrant Nero against the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul was inflamed by the fate of Simon Magus. The same saint tells us, that the faithful—alarmed at the danger with which St. Peter was threatened—entreating him to withdraw for a while from Rome. At first he refused; but, urged by their pressing entreaties, he yielded to their importunity, and made his escape by night.

7. But going out of the city, he met Jesus Christ, or what in a vision appeared in His form, and asked Him, "Lord, whither art thou going?" Christ answered, "I am going to Rome to be crucified again". St. Peter readily understood this vision to be meant for himself, and taking it for a reproof of his cowardice, and a token that it was the will of God he should suffer, returned into the city, and, being taken, was put into the Mamertine prison with St. Paul. After having remained eight months in prison, he was scourged, and then crucified with his head downwards. It was at his own request that he was crucified in this manner; for he alleged that he was

not worthy to suffer and die in the same way that his divine Master suffered and died before him. He held possession of the See of Rome for about twenty-five years, aided by St. Paul, who enjoyed with him the glory of having founded Christian Rome.

Q. When was St. Peter made Pope or head of the Church?

A. Chiefly when Christ said to him: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Feed My lambs, feed My sheep" (*Matt.*, xvi. ; *John*, xxi.).

8. One day Jesus Christ asked His disciples: "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is?" Some said He was John the Baptist, and others, Elias, and more, Jeremias, or one of the Prophets. He said again to them: "But whom do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God". Jesus answered him, and said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona, because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father, who is in heaven. And I say to thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (*St. Matt.*, xvi. 18). In this passage we find the Apostle called by a new name, *Peter*, which signifies a rock. Our Saviour spoke in the Syriac language, and in that language, *Cephas*, the name given to the Apostle, is the same as *Petros* in the Greek, for both mean a rock. The words of Christ, literally interpreted, bear this meaning: "Thou art a rock, and upon this rock I will build My Church". Jesus Christ has then built His Church on Peter—He has established Peter as the foundation of it; He has consequently appointed him the Head of all

the Faithful, including the rest of the Apostles; for to him alone, and not to the other Apostles, were His words directed. "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven", Christ says immediately after to him. Now, the power of the keys is the ensign of supreme power and authority, according to those words of the Prophet: "I will lay the key of the house of David upon his shoulders, and he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut and none shall open" (*Isaias*, xxii. 22). Consequently, by saying to St. Peter: "To thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of Heaven", He manifestly communicates to him this supreme power, as to His vicegerent upon earth.

9. Jesus Christ, after His resurrection, gave Peter a formal commission to feed His whole flock; for when Peter, in answer to our Lord's inquiry, whether He loved Him more than the other Apostles, made answer: "Yea, Lord! Thou knowest that I love Thee"; Jesus said to him: "Feed my Lambs". And when our Lord repeated, for the third time, the inquiry as to his love of Him, Peter again answered: "Lord, thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love Thee"; Jesus said again to him: "Feed My sheep" (*John*, xxi.). In this text from St. John, Christ, in commissioning Peter to *feed His lambs and sheep*, clearly gave to him alone the charge of the *whole Church, Pastors and People*—Sheep and Lambs. The Fathers of the Church have understood by the "Lambs" the faithful laity; and by the "Sheep" the Pastors of the people; for, as sheep nourish the lambs, so do the Pastors of the Church tend and spiritually feed their flocks. St. Peter has been charged by our Lord with the care of *feeding*, first the "lambs", that is all the faithful, and then the "sheep", that is the other Apostles and their successors.*

10. Again, a more than usual ceremony attends

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the commission given St. Peter. He is singled out from the rest of the company, and Christ asks him : “ Lovest thou Me more than these ? ” He asks him a second and a third time : “ Lovest thou me ? ” And after each answer and assurance of his love, Christ gives him an *unlimited* commission to *feed His flock*. Our Saviour’s *threefold* repetition both of the question put to St. Peter, and the command laid upon him to feed His “ lambs ” and “ sheep ”, marks out a more than ordinary importance of the duty with which he was charged, and was intended to imprint on his mind an idea of some extraordinary injunction. The question itself, “ Lovest thou Me more than these ? ” imports that Christ required a greater love from St. Peter than from the other Apostles. And why so ? Because the higher a person is raised in the ministry of the Gospel, the greater his love ought to be for Christ, to enable him to fulfil his trust. And, therefore, since Christ demanded a greater love from St. Peter than from the other Apostles—even the beloved disciple, St. John, who was present—it follows that the command He then laid upon him to “ feed ” His “ lambs and sheep ”, raised him to a higher station than that of the other Apostles. Neither was this intended as a lesson to St. Peter alone, but to all his successors, who, without an extraordinary love for God, and zeal for His Church, can never be qualified to discharge their important trust of *feeding both the lambs and sheep of Christ*; that is, of governing His *whole flock*, for such is the true meaning of the text.

Q. Can you give any other proofs from Scripture of Peter’s Primacy or supremacy over the rest of the Apostles ?

A. Yes ; in the lists of the Apostles given in the Gospel, Peter is always put first; and he is expressly styled the *first*.

11. When the Scripture gives the names of the

Apostles in order—as in St. Matthew, x. 2, 3—Peter's name is placed first; and his name in the first place is not to be attributed to his age, for Andrew was older than Peter, and was even the first to follow Christ. St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke, in the list of the Apostles, take particular notice of the name of *Peter* which Christ gave him (for his name was Simon), and which indicates the particular privilege annexed to the name; and therefore St. Matthew expressly calls him the *first*. St. Ambrose says: “Not Andrew, but Peter, was chief amongst the Apostles” Besides, Peter always spoke and acted as chief of the Apostles and Head of the Church, and his right to do so was never questioned by the other Apostles. After the Ascension of our Lord, Peter assembled the Apostles, presided at the election of one to take the place of Judas, and introduced the subject to the others (*Acts*, i.). It was he who, on the day of Pentecost, first preached Christ crucified, and by the conversion of three thousand at his first sermon, formed the beginning of the Christian Church, and verified the words of Christ, that he should be the *Rock* from which the Church should arise. It was he who in the first Council, held at Jerusalem by the Apostles, gave the *definitive* sentence, “after there had been much disputing”, that the Christians should not be subjected to the Jewish rite of circumcision. “Men, brethren”, said St. Peter, “you know that in former days God made *choice* among *us*, that by *my mouth* the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel”; and when St. Peter had ceased speaking, “all the multitude *held their peace*”; and even James himself, who was Bishop of Jerusalem, in which the Council was held, rose merely to assent to and confirm what St. Peter had decided (*Acts*, xv.).

12. There is no truth more clearly established in

Scripture than the *Primacy* or superiority of Peter over the rest of the Apostles. Christian writers, and the holy Fathers in every age, have always attested, as a truth revealed by God, that Jesus Christ constituted St. Peter Prince of the Apostles and visible Head of the Church. "Peter always speaks first", says St. Ambrose, "and he does so because he is chief of the Apostles, and because it is to him that Jesus Christ confided His whole flock". It is an undoubted fact that the successors of St. Peter have always claimed this supreme authority, and have exercised it throughout the whole Church, as occasion required, in every age, from the very beginning. Now, considering the nature of man, it is evidently impossible that any one Bishop of the Church should have acquired such authority over all the rest, even in the most different nations and the most distant kingdoms, or that he could have exercised it everywhere among them, if it had not been given him from the beginning, and ordained by Jesus Christ. "It is", says Pope Pius VI., "an article of faith taught by Jesus Christ Himself, transmitted from age to age, maintained by the teaching of the holy Fathers, carefully preserved at all times by the universal Church, confirmed by the decrees of sovereign Pontiffs and Councils, that Jesus Christ has built His Church on an unshaken rock, and that by a peculiar privilege, has chosen Peter from among all the others, for the first place in the Apostolic body". It is then certain that the Church of Jesus Christ has been founded on Peter, that our Lord has constituted him the root and foundation of ecclesiastical unity, and that he alone has been vested with unlimited authority over the entire flock.

Q. Has not Christ built His Church, according to St. Paul, upon the other Apostles, jointly with St. Peter?

A. Jesus Christ has not built His Church upon the other Apostles in the same manner as upon St. Peter.

13. Although the Church is built upon the other Apostles jointly with St. Peter, yet as it is built in a more *eminent* manner upon St. Peter than upon the rest, no inference can be drawn that the Apostles and St. Peter are on a level, or that St. Peter is not superior to the rest. Christ told St. Peter that He *would build His Church upon him*—that is, that he would be the very *foundation* of it, that it would have a continual *dependence* on him during his life, and upon his successors after his death. Christ commissioned St. Peter to feed His “lambs” and “sheep”—that is, to govern His Church, both Pastors and people; but if the other Apostles were on a level with St. Peter, Christ’s commission to him would be altogether nugatory as far as the “sheep” were concerned; for one can *govern* only inferiors or subjects. Again, if Christ did not intend to confer on St. Peter jurisdiction over the rest of the Apostles, why should He single him out, *renew* his commission, and address Himself to that Apostle *alone*, and not likewise to the rest there present?

14. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, says: “And He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the **EDIFYING** of the body of Christ (iv. 11, 12). Here ordinary “Pastors and Teachers” are joined with the “Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists”. And it is equally said of them all that Christ gave them for the **EDIFYING** of the *mystical body*; that is, the building of His Church. But can it be inferred from thence that the Church is built in the *same degree* upon ordinary “Pastors and Teachers” as upon the *Apostles themselves*? Or, that she is

: not built in a more *eminent* manner upon *Bishops* than upon the *inferior Clergy*? Can it be concluded thence that the Apostles had no jurisdiction over those whom St. Paul calls "Pastors and Teachers", but that they were all upon a level? If not, neither can it be concluded that St. Peter had no *jurisdiction* over the rest of the *Apostles*, from St. Paul saying, that *the Church is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets*.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

POPE PIUS IX., SUPREME HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

* The second great official attribute of the Pope is supreme authority over cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, laymen, and every other man that professes the Christian doctrines. The Pope exercises unlimited authority in religious matters—remember, I say in religious matters—in spiritual matters we are all bound to obey him, the highest dignitary of the Church. The moment a man contradicts a word of the Pope, or rebels against it, be he bishop or priest, not of course in the essence of his ordination, but in the legitimacy of its exercise, he is an absolute heretic, and goes out from the Church. And though he may be the most learned man in the world, the greatest philosopher, a man of the greatest popularity, wielding a whole people and shaping their destinies—at that moment there is an end of him. Not a man amongst us, the humblest Catholic in the world, will not touch him or have any more to say to him. Now, in order to have this official attribute, you can easily imagine that the Almighty God, who guides that election of the Head of the Church, will select a great man, a man whose sanctity of life, whose purity of heart, whose devotion to the altar and the Church, will, in some degree, fit him for that magnificent dignity. And in truth, the proof of this lies in the fact, that although we have had a succession of hundreds of Popes, going through the ages of history, side by side with their contemporaries, though many of them had their faults, and though many of them committed sins, yet, taken in the whole, they are as far beyond the kings and emperors with whom they lived, in

sanctity and purity of life, in education and grandeur of character, as the latter were beyond other men in their imperial power. In that long roll I claim, that up to this sad century of ours, that since the day Peter received the keys from Christ, that never have those keys been held by a nobler character, by a grander man, than aged Pius IX. who governs us to-day. For the proof of this, only look over the Pontificate with me in some of the salient points. You know, my friends, that it is now six-and-twenty years since Pius IX. was elected to be the Pope and the head of the Catholic Church. He is the only man of all those who succeeded St. Peter, who has outlived the years of Peter upon the Pontifical throne of Rome. It was considered a kind of proverb in the Church that no Pope should live as many years in his Papacy as St. Peter, who lived twenty-five years. Pius IX. was the first Pope who has outlived the years of Peter. I was at Rome as a youth in the first Pontificate of this man. I am speaking to you this evening, not of things that I have read in books, or that I have heard from other men; I am speaking of a country in which I have lived the best years of my life—if Italy and the city of Rome. I am speaking of the things that I have seen and judged of with my own eyes and with my own mind. I saw in 1847, in Rome, a fine young man, his hair was black as the raven's wing, his eye was bright with the commingled beauty of the pure soul that shone through it, and the manly vigour of his form—for this man was educated in his youth for a soldier—stately, kingly, more than kingly even in his physical appearance, he seemed a man every inch fit to be a ruler of his fellowmen; with a conformation and a form, indeed, where the very God had seemed to set the seal and give the world assurance of a man. I saw him on that day, when my young eyes, fresh from the Green Isle of Erin, full of Irish faith, of Irish love, as I looked with a timid glance on the Vicar of Christ—on that day he was surrounded by the plaudits of the Roman and Italian people. The whole world echoed the praises of Pius IX. The King of Italy and Archdukes of Italy, the kings of the various nations of Europe, were loud in their praises of the new Pope. Even here in America the echoes of his praise were caught up, and by the most eloquent tongue proclaimed, the tongue of America's last, though not least of her statesmen, or philosophers, over whose grave the nation is weeping to-day. Why did they praise him? Ah, my friends, they praised him for the act by which he began his Pontificate, in which he showed the genius and the character of this noble-minded man, when he came to the throne.

There had been trouble for years before in Italy, and he found many of the Italian people, his own subjects, languishing in prison for their rebellion, or attempt at revolution, and for their unquiet dispositions. He found that many of them were in exile, some living in Paris, some in London, and some here in America. What was the first act of the new Pontiff? The moment the tiara was on his head, and the sceptre of his apostolic reign in his hand, the moment he spoke as a monarch, was, "Open that gate and let them out; come back, you exiles in every foreign land; come back to your own blue sky and sunny soil; come back to the bosom of Italy. I am not so much your king as your father; and I will trust myself to the love, to the gratitude, and to the affection of the people". This act I witnessed. I saw the exiles return and bathe the hand of their liberator with grateful tears. I saw the eyes of the little children whose fathers came back to them from out of the dungeons and the prisons rejoicing under the smile of the man whose hands had unbarred those prison gates. The whole world rejoiced: but Pius IX. was destined to know the vanity and folly of human popularity. Oh, thrice foolish is the man who would build a house, or his life, or his soul on such frail, sandy foundations as the applause and plaudits of men. Thrice bafeooled is the man that gasps for such glory, for God will permit him, even in this world, to outlive the breath of his passing fame. And unless he has built his hopes, his reputation, his character, his soul, on some more solid, unshaken foundation, then all will crumble to ruin, and the aged man will live to weep over the words of praise that resounded in his ear in thunder tones from the plaudits of men. That word is like the morning summer wind that moves the foliage of the acacia tree, then passes away to salute some other hillside, and refresh some other field. Pius IX. knew it. I saw him, silent and unmoved. He saw and recognized it, even as my young eyes did the grandeur of that character, because of the depth of his humility.—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

PROOF OF THE PRIMACY OF ST. PETER.

† The oldest Christian monuments represent St. Peter as Prince of the Apostles and Head of the Church. The most remarkable of that kind is a bronze lamp that was found in the excavations made on Mount Cælius, and now preserved in the Museum de Medicis. This lamp, formed like a ship, represents St. Peter standing at the poop, and holding the

helm, whilst St. Paul is seen at the prow, with his right hand raised higher than his left, that is, in the attitude of an orator, and in keeping with the title of chief speaker, given him in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Scipio Maffei, in addressing Benedict XIV., thus said to him : " As a proof of the supremacy of St. Peter over the whole Church, is not this monument an eloquent volume composed in the olden times ?" Mamachi tells us that there is preserved in Florence a sculptured lamp, similar in shape to the one found in Mount Cælius, in which St. Peter and St. Paul are represented, one on the poop and the other on the prow. This lamp is of the highest antiquity. There is frequently found engraved on *sarcophagi* and rings, a vessel in which St. Peter is represented as holding the helm.—*Mamachi Antiquitates Christianæ.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Why is the Catholic Church called the Church of Rome?
2. Why is the Head of the Church called Pope and Sovereign Pontiff?
3. Was the title of Pope ever given to any one except to the Head of the Church?
4. Did St. Peter preach in Rome and fix his See there?
5. Relate the particular circumstances in the life of St. Peter.
6. Was the death of Simon Magus resented by Nero?
7. Relate the circumstances of St. Peter's death.
8. How do you prove that St. Peter was appointed head of the Church?
9. Can you adduce any text from St. John in favour of St. Peter's supremacy?
10. What is to be principally observed with regard to the text from St. John?
11. Can you cite other passages from Scripture in favour of St. Peter's supremacy?
12. What are the words of St. Ambrose and Pope Pius VI. as to the primacy of St. Peter?
13. Is the Church built upon the other Apostles as upon St. Peter?
14. Can it be inferred from St. Paul, that St. Peter was not superior to the other Apostles?

PRACTICE.

1. Always speak in the most respectful terms of the Pope, and cheerfully submit to his decrees and ordinances.

2. Think often that it is to him you are indebted for the many *indulgences* you receive ; and, in return for his favours, offer up your prayers to God for him.

PRAYER.

Grant, O Lord ! that we may ever continue attached to our holy Father the Pope, and receive with respect every ordinance coming from him ; for he, under Thee, is our guide and teacher, and, from the power conferred on him, can never lead us astray. Amen.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

ON THE POPE AND THE CARDINALS.

Q. Why is St. Peter represented holding keys in his hand ?

A. Because he received from Jesus Christ the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

1. Jesus Christ, after having told St. Peter that He would build His Church upon him, addressed him in these words : “I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven ; and whatever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed in heaven” (*Matt.*, xvi. 19). The keys in Scripture are the ensigns of supreme power and authority ; and Christ, in saying, “To thee I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven”, entrusted Peter with unlimited power, appointed him His vicegerent, and delegated to him His authority. In order that this great power and authority bestowed upon St. Peter should be often present to our minds, that Apostle is represented with *keys* in his hand.

He holds two—one a symbol of his “jurisdiction”, and the other of his “orders”. One key is turned towards heaven, to show that St. Peter had the power of opening or closing it; the other is directed towards the earth, signifying that he had full authority over the faithful, and the power of imposing laws upon them. In Italy a custom prevails of gilding one of the keys, and of plating the other. The gilt key designates St. Peter’s power of absolving; and the plated key, the power of excommunicating—a power considered inferior to the other.

Q. Has the authority given to St. Peter ceased with his death?

A. No; it has descended in an unbroken line to his lawful successors.

2. The power conferred on St. Peter has descended in an uninterrupted succession to his legitimate heirs. Jesus Christ appointed St. Peter, in recompense for his great faith and ardent love, the corner-stone of His Church, and promised him that “the gates of hell should never prevail against it”. But, according to this promise of Jesus Christ, the Church must continue to the end of time; therefore, to the *end of time* the *foundation* on which the Church has been built must remain; otherwise the gates of hell would prevail against it. The words addressed by Jesus Christ to St. Peter were directed to his successors, as well as to himself; his successors, therefore, equally as himself, are the foundation-stone of the Church, and have inherited his supremacy and supreme authority.

3. “When leaving this world”, says St. Leo, “St. Peter ceased not to govern the Church; united by an indissoluble bond to the eternal Pontiff, he still presides over his See, and to his successors is transmitted the stability which he himself received from

Jesus Christ". "Let no one think", says Bossuet, "that the ministry of St. Peter ceased with his death. That which was to support an *eternal* Church could never have an *end*. Peter shall live in his successors; Peter shall always speak in his chair. This is the unanimous voice of the Fathers; and six hundred and thirty Bishops, met in council at Chalcedon, have confirmed what the Fathers have taught".

Q. Why did Christ institute one visible Head of His Church upon earth?

A. Because, as the Church is a visible body or society of men, it was most becoming that they should have a visible supreme Head among them.

4. The Church was ordained to be spread over all nations, though differing from one another in language, customs, government, and everything else except religion. But it would have been morally impossible to have kept them all united in *one* body if there was not *one* common visible Head or supreme authority among them, to which all should submit. This Head of the Church is, therefore, the centre of unity by which the Church of Christ, throughout the whole world, is joined in one body. He is the spiritual father and teacher of all Christians, and the supreme judge and lawgiver in all things relating to religion, whether as to faith, morals, or discipline. The Primacy, both of honour and jurisdiction over all the other Bishops, belongs to him; and all the members of the Church are obliged to pay the greatest respect, veneration, and obedience to his decrees and orders in all things relating to religion.

Q. Is not the Pope a temporal prince, as well as Supreme Head of the Church?

A. Yes.

5. Though the kingdom of Jesus Christ is not of

this world, and though the successors of St. Peter possess not by *divine right* any worldly possessions ; yet, through the liberality of Christian princes, a principality has been attached to the Holy See, called the Patrimony of St. Peter. This temporal Principality, arising from the possession of the "States of the Church", has, under Providence, largely contributed to the free and untrammelled exercise of the spiritual functions of the Popes, as also to the development of the interests of religion, by the support given to learned and charitable institutions. If the Bishop of Rome had been the subject of any sovereign potentate, or the citizen of a republic, there would have been every reason to fear that he could not always enjoy that perfect liberty of action, so necessary to obtain for his measures and decrees the regard and respect of the faithful through the entire world. It is in this light that the Bishops of the United States, assembled in council at Baltimore in the year 1849, viewed the subject of the temporal dominions of the Pope.*

6. Some months later, the Fathers of the Council held at Soissons published a decree, the substance of which is contained in the following words : "As it is our ardent desire that the Holy See should be vested with every thing that may be favourable to the exercise of that authority which it has received from Jesus Christ, we censure and condemn the crude projects of those who endeavour, in any way, to deprive the Popes of their temporal sovereignty, and who maintain that this temporal sovereignty is unlawful, and contrary to the institution of Jesus Christ and to the doctrine of the Gospel. It is on this account", say these Fathers, "that we heartily wish and pray that the states conceded to the Apostolic See should be preserved in all their integrity, in order that his Holiness may be enabled to exercise

his power and authority with full liberty and security through the whole world".

7. Pope Pius IX., in his allocution of the 10th of May, 1850, speaks to the same effect : " It has been the will of God that the princes of the earth—even those who are not in communion with the Church of Rome—should defend and maintain the temporal sovereignty of the Holy See, which has been, by a disposition of Providence, enjoyed for many centuries by the Roman Pontiffs. The possession of that temporal dominion enables the reigning Pope to exercise his supreme Apostolical authority in the government of the universal Church, with that liberty which is necessary to fulfil the duties of his high apostolical office, and procure the salvation of the flock of Christ".

Q. By whom is the Pope elected ?

A. The Pope is elected by the Cardinals.

8. For many centuries, the Pope was elected by the Roman clergy, and in the election, the body of the faithful took a very active part ; but, for many years past, the election has been confined to the Cardinals, who are the Princes and Senators of the Church, and are vested with a dignity inferior only to that of the Pope.

9. The learned are divided in their opinions in reference to the origin of Cardinals, and the derivation of the name Cardinal. Some think that Cardinal comes from the word *cardo-cardinalis*, a hinge on which a gate or door turns ; because Cardinals are the hinges or pivots on which the government of the Church rolls. According to Baronius, Bellarmin, and other liturgical writers, the officiating Priests of the parishes and churches of Rome were the first Cardinals, and they were so called because, when

they accompanied the Pope to the altar, they stood *ad cornua*, that is, at the corners or angles of it. Besides the Churches served by Priests, there were a great many hospitals, the administration of which was entrusted to Deacons. These Deacons also attended the Pope whenever he officiated, and equally as the Priests of the parishes, stood at the corners of the altar; hence, the distinction between the *Cardinal Priests* and the *Cardinal Deacons*. The titular Bishops of the Sees in the vicinity of Rome, called *suburbicarian* Bishops, also attended on the Pope on all solemn ceremonies, and took up their positions, like the Priests and Deacons of whom we have just spoken, at the corners of the altar; and hence the origin of Cardinal Bishops. The latter in virtue of their episcopal consecration have always taken precedence over the Cardinal Priests and Cardinal Deacons.

10. The dignity of Cardinal, in the sense in which that word is now understood, is the highest in the Church, next to that of the Pope. The Cardinals are the Princes and Senators of the Church, the Councillors of the Pope, his Coadjutors and Vicars in the functions of the sovereign Pontificate. They form the *Consistory*, or the Council of the Pope, who selects them from all nations, to aid him in the government of the Church.†

Q. How many Cardinals are there?

A. Seventy.

11. By a Bull of Sixtus V., published in 1586, the number of Cardinals was fixed at seventy. They are divided into three orders; namely, six Cardinal Bishops, fifty Cardinal Priests, and fourteen Cardinal Deacons. The six Cardinals of the first order are the Bishops of Ostia, Porto, Palestrina, Albano, Sabina,

and Frascati—suffragans of the Patriarchate of the West. The Cardinal Priests are nearly all Bishops; but as they have the title of Priests, they belong to the second order. The Cardinal Deacons are so called, because their title is only that of Deacon.

12. In the Council held at Lyons in 1248, Pope Innocent IV. presented to the Cardinals the red hat, as a sign of their being obliged, if necessary, to shed their blood for the cause of God and of His Church. In 1464, Paul III. presented them with the red casock and cap. In 1630, the title of Eminence was given to them exclusively, by an order of Urban VIII. But the choicest and most glorious of their privileges is that of electing the Pope. The Cardinals cannot, while the Holy See is vacant, exercise Papal jurisdiction, nor have they the power of making laws, except the interest of religion may urgently require it.* The body of Cardinals is called the "College of Cardinals" or "Sacred College". The assembly of Cardinals, when they meet for the purpose of electing a Pope, takes the name of "Conclave". The word Conclave is also applied to the place in which they meet for the purpose of the election—which had been the Quirinal Palace—where as many rooms have been prepared as there are Cardinals, and where they remain shut up till the election shall have taken place. They meet once a day in the chapel of the Conclave, where a scrutiny is made of their votes, which are written and placed in an urn. This is repeated every day till two-thirds, at least, are in favour of one candidate for the Pontifical Chair, who is then considered duly elected.†

Q. Who can be elected Pope?

A. A Bishop, Priest, Deacon, or even a simple Cleric.

* Collegium, Cardinalium, sede papali vacante nullam habet potestatem condendi leges.' (Reiffenstuel.)

13. The Roman Pontiff can be taken from any rank of the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy. In the early ages of the Church, Sub-deacons were not often raised to the dignity of Pope ; but Deacons were often elected. Priests were seldom chosen to fill that high office ; and the appointment of Bishops to it was of very rare occurrence. The first Pope raised from the Episcopal office to the Papal throne was Formoso, Bishop of Porto, who was elected in the year 891. Ecclesiastical writers tell us that St. Linus, before his elevation to the Papal chair, had been consecrated Bishop by St. Peter, but had not been attached to any particular Church. The discipline of the Church in this respect has undergone a great change ; for, from about the thirteenth century, it was the ordinary practice to select the Pope from among the Bishops ; and from the year 1522 to 1775, we find only three Popes elected who had not been previously Bishops. In our times, Clement XIV., Pius VI., and Gregory XVI., were the only Popes who had been simple Priests at the time of their elevation to the Papacy.

Q. From whom has the Pope received his jurisdiction ?
A. He has received it immediately from God.

14. From the words of Jesus Christ addressed to St. Peter, and in his person to his lawful successors, it clearly follows that the Pope enjoys a Primacy, a supremacy not only as to honour, but also as to power, authority, and immediate jurisdiction over the entire Church. This Supremacy he has *immediately* received from God.* When he is canonically elected —elected according to the established regulations—

* Papa regit Ecclesias totius mundi. (Felix II. Ep. 1.)
Papa est princeps in universa terra et Ecclesia, hæres potestatis a Deo datæ S. Petro. (Nicolaus I. Ep. 8.) Papa portat onus omnium Ecclesiarum (Johannes VIII. Ep. 80.)

and consents to his election, he, without any further confirmation, becomes invested with authority over the entire Church, though he be neither Bishop, nor Priest, nor Deacon, nor Sub-deacon, but a mere Cleric. From the very moment that he gives consent to his election, he is capable of performing every act belonging to Papal jurisdiction : he can, for example, grant indulgences, pass censures, grant dispensations, appoint Canons, institute Bishops, create Cardinals. But the peculiar powers of the Priesthood and the Episcopacy, such as forgiving sins, administering the sacraments of Confirmation and of Holy Orders, he cannot exercise until he has first been consecrated. From what has been said, it follows that the Papacy—the sovereign Pontificate—is a dignity not of Orders, but of Jurisdiction.

15. If the Pope be a Bishop at the time of his elevation, he receives no other consecration. Being clothed with the episcopal character, he is on an equality with the other Bishops ; but as Pope, and vested with the dignity and authority of Head of the Church, he is superior not only to the simple faithful, but to the Pastors themselves. If at the time of his election, the Pope be not in Holy Orders, he can receive all on the same day. The privilege of consecrating a Pope not previously a Bishop belongs to the Bishop of Ostia. "No Metropolitan", writes St. Augustin, in 411, "can ordain the Bishop of Rome, for this right is reserved to the Bishop of Ostia".

Q. Why does the Pope change his name, when he has given his consent to his election ?

A. Because he becomes the successor of St. Peter, whose name was changed by Jesus Christ.

16. In former times, when God was pleased to enter into a covenant with Abraham, and to constitute him the father of His chosen people, he first changed

his name: "Neither shall thy name be called any more Abram (*high father*), but thou shalt be called Abraham (*father of the multitude*), because I have made thee a father of many nations"—*Gen.*, xvii. 5. In like manner Jesus Christ changed the name of him whom he had selected from among the Apostles to be the Father and Head of the faithful, when He said to him: "Thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter"—*John*, i. 42. *Peter! a rock!* The word requires no great explanation; for it conveys at once the idea of strength and duration. The rock alone successfully resists the power of the elements—it alone stands firm against the fury of the tempest. The Pope, on being raised to the chair of St. Peter, becomes the successor of that Apostle, whose name was changed by Jesus Christ—he becomes one elevated above all others—he becomes the representative of God and the Vicar of Jesus Christ. On this account it is that, when he consents to his election, he adopts a name different from that by which he was called before. This practice is not, however, of a very ancient date. According to Fleury, Sergius IV., crowned Pope in 1009, was the first who changed his name. He was called Peter; and through respect for the name, he laid it aside at the time of his elevation to the Papacy. In the eleventh century, the practice became universal, and continued so up to the present time, if we except the one solitary case of Marcellus II.‡

Q. Can the Pope resign his power and authority?
A. Yes; he can.

17. In the history of the Church, we find more than one instance of a Pope laying down his dignity and power, after having exercised it for some time.

St. Celestine V., who, from a devout hermit, was raised to the chair of Peter, abdicated his functions after a reign of scarcely four months, and was succeeded by Cardinal Cajetan, under the name of Boniface VIII. Alarmed at the responsibility of the office, and the difficulty of reconciling his customary exercises of prayer and meditation with the engrossing duties of the Papacy, he determined, after a reign of four months, to return to his former solitude. Accordingly, in a Consistory held at Naples, he abdicated the Pontifical chair, assumed his former name of Peter, put on again his religious habit, and entreated those around to select an efficient successor to him. In the annals of the Church, we find the names of others who willingly laid aside the power and authority conferred on them as Vicars of Christ. §

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

PONTIFICATE OF PIUS IX.

* Whatever else this nineteenth century, our age, has failed to produce, it has produced the noblest Pope and the grandest man that ever sat upon the chair of Peter in Rome. Whatever else may be written on the face of the history of the nineteenth century, in letters of blood, or in letters of black ink, there is one thing that must be written in letters of burnished gold, and it is the Pontificate, glorious and magnificent, of this saintly old man who sits in Rome, in all his afflictions, still crowned with the honour and the glory of which no man can deprive him, Pius IX., head of the Catholic Church founded by our divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, representing upon this earth the unity, the sanctity, and the eternity of the Almighty God who made it—a unity all the more wonderful in a world so unholy and defiled as ours, an eternity all the more wonderful in a world so evanescent, so changeable, so transitory as ours. And this is the meaning of the word of Scripture when the Psalmist says, “God is wonderful in all His works”. Every work of God is wonder-

ful, because everything that exists participates in some form or other in the attributes of God; and the more largely anything participates in the divine attributes, the more wonderful that thing becomes, because the more like to God. And as it is in the Church of God, so is it with the interior character of the glorious man who stands at the helm and guides the ship of the Church. Pius is a man of faith. He has been ruined by showing his faith in his own people; in the faith of the heart of Italy; in the faith and integrity of the Italian people; that was human faith, and it was destroyed and crumbled away before him by the ingratitude of his own Roman people; but he had a higher faith in God; he leaned upon God with the most implicit faith. From the day of his coronation to this hour he has lived in faith; the Church has always rested on faith. I have seen him in the most of his difficulties. I have seen him when Rome was threatened; when the bishops, prelates, and cardinals came to him saying with pallid lips—"Holy Father, you must fly, your life is in danger". And there he, unmoved, with a smile of supreme confidence on his face, I have heard the grand old Pontiff say:—"Where is your faith? remember the words of Christ:—'Have faith in God, and if you have that, you can say, move this mountain, and it will be moved'". Never for an instant did his divine faith falter. Firm as a rock, immovable as the rock upon which the Church of God is founded. The most learned men in Europe rose up and departed from him and from the Church, and he, like the divine unerring Master, said:—"Will you also leave me? If the whole world leave me my faith shall never move". Firm as a rock, when England and her clergy approached him in a spirit of compromise and only asked certain conditions, on which they would yield and return to the communion of the Catholic Church. The answer of the Pontiff was: "No conditions, no compact can I make that would compromise the deposit of the Catholic faith; if you do not believe, I can never receive you into her bosom". A man of hope. Oh, my friends, how magnificently strong is the hope that has sustained the old man unto the extreme old age that now crowns his poor venerable head. In the midst of the afflictions that would have broken a stronger heart when the temporal crown fell from his brow, and the hand of Catholic men placed upon him a crown of thorns, he is still sustained with a mighty hope within him. Well may he say with the Apostles, "We are saved by hope". Still he remained at his post cheering the disconsolate, animating the faltering, sending out his word from year to year to the earth, proclaiming,

"I am here a prisoner amongst my people; but I know what I hope for, and the victory and the triumph shall be mine at last". For all this I thank him ; I honour the aged man who so worthily fills the highest throne of earth ; I honour him more than if I saw him crowned with the thrice resplendent Tiara of humanity—praise, human glory, and human power. Oh ! I honour him in his old age. For, even as Peter was imprisoned in Rome, so Pius IX. is imprisoned to-day in Rome, and the crown of empire has fallen from his head ; but the crown of thorns is surmounted by the higher crown of spiritual dominion which God put upon the head of Peter, and which no man can ever pluck from the brows of Peter's successors. I follow him, I go back with joy to the past, when the occasion was given to me of beholding him and receiving his benediction, when his fatherly smile was bestowed on the Irish friar. I follow him in the halls of my memory in the past. I have seen him in glory ; I have seen him in sorrow ; but I hallow him with a louder voice as I behold him in the light of that future which my faith reveals to me, coming forth from out of his prison-house to ascend his throne once more, crowned with the honour and glory of which the world cannot longer deprive him ; coming forth the representative of eternal power as well as of eternal justice, to wield once more in undisputed sway the peaceful sceptre of God's designs in the nations, and with an acknowledged royal hand to point out to all the people of a united world the path of freedom here and glory in the world to come.

. . . . I once heard an old woman in Ireland say, and she expressed the very mind of the Church, "Father dear, I always believed in the Pope, but I never loved him so dearly as I do now, because he has declared that the Mother of God was conceived without sin". There is the mind of the Church ; the great heart of the spouse of Jesus Christ enlarges itself in love, to whom God gave the grace and the fair privilege of declaring Mary's Immaculate Conception. Upon that love—almost miraculously singular, Pius IX. has sustained himself up to this day, and will sustain himself until that heart has passed from us to an honoured sepulchre. Ireland, my native land, the Sovereign Pontiff Pius IX. deserves more. I love him, not only as a Catholic, because he has proclaimed the Immaculate Conception of Mary, my Mother. I love him not only as a priest, because by his latest defence of the dogmatic decision of the Church of God he has secured to me, and such as I, for ever and for ever the lights that can never pale. He has given us a guiding voice that no man can contradict, for the security and certainty

of our faith ; but I love him as an Irishman, because in the midst of his sorrows and his troubles, he had time to think of the fidelity and the love of the Irish people for their holy religion, and he was the first Pontiff that ever rewarded an Irishman in a grand and royal manner. Other popes have been accused of caring little about Ireland. One of them has been accused of caring so little about Ireland as to throw it into the hands of Henry II. of England, saying to him, "Take it if you like it". But thanks be to God I have lived to see that proved to be a lie. Mr. Froude, whatever he takes home from America, will take home one thing with him, and that is a document from an Irish Bishop—the Bishop of Ossory—that I think he will not be able to get over. And that document proves to demonstration that no Pope of Rome ever gave Ireland to England. What the domination was that had been carried out, through blood and injustice, and begun in perjury and lying, has now become a matter of history. And I thank God, for it has wiped out of the mind of many an Irishman the uncomfortable feeling that a Pope thought so little of our native land. Thanks be to God that day has never dawned, and never will.—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

CARDINAL MANNING, ARCHBISHOP OF WESTMINSTER.

† In every state, hue, and circumstance of life, Cardinal Manning is at home. In his titular Church at Rome, addressing the clergy in Italian, and the crowd of his own countrymen, assembled to witness his installation, in English ; in his pro-cathedral at Kensington, preaching to a congregation half composed of heretics, who have come as much to see him as to hear him ; at a garden party at Chiswick ; at Exeter Hall, pleading the cause of total abstinence with all the fervour of an apostle ; at the Vatican Basilica, swaying the debates and shaping the decisions of an *Œcumical Council* ; at a bright Oxford banquet in honour of some academic festival reappearing for a brief hour, as if from another world, on the stage of his early triumphs and first friendships—wherever the work which he has chosen to take in hand may be in any way advanced, Cardinal Manning is to be found, always saying the right word and doing the right thing, as by a sort of natural gift and instinctive wisdom.

The position which Dr. Manning actually holds is, it must be allowed, a great one. The income which it gives him is less than a decent benefice in the English Church. The

head of the Roman Catholics of England, like the Pope himself, is in no small degree indebted to "the voluntary principle". But the greatness of his office stands out in more conspicuous relief from his bareness of this world's goods. The servant who admits you tells you, probably, that his Eminence is engaged at that moment; he has some one with him, and several other persons are waiting to see him. You send up your card, and patiently wait your turn in a spacious chamber, plainly furnished, upon the white walls of which hang a few religious paintings and engravings. You pass the time in looking at them, and in turning over a few costly illustrated books—presentation copies apparently—which lie upon the tables. Perhaps you venture to glance through an open door to the right, at a large apartment beyond, which is, in fact, the chief reception-room. Here, under a glass-case, is the scarlet biretta conferred upon the Cardinal by pontifical hands upon the occasion of his appointment to the Sacred College. On the other side of the room, under a canopy, is a large silver crozier. The minutes slip away; the visitors who have preceded you—some of whom bear a very suspicious resemblance to ritualistic clergymen or ex-clergymen—one by one disappear; and at last the butler tells you that your turn has come, and that his Eminence will see you. Passing through the library, you find yourself in his study—a tranquil, cheerful-looking room—the most noticeable decorations of which are two photographs over the mantelpiece, representing St. Edward the Confessor's shrine in Westminster Abbey, as it was in the thirteenth century, and as it is in the nineteenth. Here, among a mass of books and papers, Cardinal Manning sits and works, in spite of perpetual interruptions and distractions, getting through more work in seven or eight hours than most men could accomplish in sixteen. The Cardinal's ascetic face, with its keen, penetrating eyes and sharply-cut features, wears the stamp of intellectual supremacy. "Plain living and high thinking" are written upon every line of it. The table at which he is sitting speaks significantly of the variety of his occupations, bearing, as it does, proof-sheets of an article for the *Nineteenth Century*; the MS. of a paper to be read at the Catholic Academia; notes of two or three sermons to be preached on the next Sunday; a pile of letters read, and duly endorsed for the guidance of secretaries; another pile, scarcely less formidable, still to be disposed of; a number of Latin documents, impressed with the archiepiscopal seal, and apparently awaiting the archiepiscopal signature. He wears the ordi-

nary undress robe of a Catholic bishop, his scarlet skull-cap and stockings denoting his cardinalitial rank ; and as he rises to greet you his attenuated figure gives an impression of greater tallness than he really possesses.

Apart from the wider and more general ecclesiastical interests which have a strong claim upon his time and thoughts, the immediate cares and responsibilities of his office are grave, and touch him very closely. He presides over the poorest religious community in the world, and the relations between him and his spiritual children are surprisingly close and intimate. Five-sixths of the Roman Catholics in England are Irish, too many of whom—sunk in the depths of poverty and material wretchedness—look, as with the wistful helplessness of dumb creatures, to their chief pastor for active sympathy and practical guidance. The Cardinal's indefatigable personal labours amongst the poor, his crusade against the besetting sin of drunkenness, his earnest advocacy of the claims of the agricultural labourer to something more than a pittance barely sufficient to sustain life, his efforts to improve the social and intellectual position of the artizan, have secured the generous and ungrudging admiration of the most cordial enemies of his Church. The Cardinal and the clergy attached to him live together in a plain and simple way, and on the right of the entrance-hall is their common room, where they assemble daily for one o'clock dinner. It is hung around with portraits of the successive "Vicars-Apostolic" of the London district before the "restoration of the hierarchy" under Cardinal Wiseman. The Archbishop's house is rich in memorials of a more troublesome time. In the private chapel is a chest half filled with clothes dipped in the blood of the "martyrs" who suffered under the Elizabethan legislation. Other highly prized relics of this little oratory are the mitre and maniple of St. Thomas a Becket, which stand under glass on the altar, and autograph letters of St. Theresa and St. Francis de Sales. It is here that the Cardinal says his daily Mass ; after which he not unfrequently administers the "Sacrament of Confirmation" to adult "converts". Such are the surroundings in which Cardinal Manning finds his present home—different, *toto cœlo*, from the scenes in which the earlier years of his career were spent. It requires an effort of something more than memory to figure to oneself this Prince of the Catholic Church—who seems to be the embodiment of all that is ascetic, hierarchical, and distinctively Roman—as a Protestant clergyman. And yet it is only thirty years ago that he was prominently before the world in that capacity.

But even in those days Archdeacon Manning was of a spirit ecclesiastical very far removed from the traditions of the Church of England sedulously maintained by his clerical neighbours. But in truth, in the case of Cardinal Manning, one is more inclined to dwell upon his present, or to speculate upon his future, than to go back to a page in his life memorable, indeed, but finished and turned down. He is essentially a man of action, little inclined to linger "among the mouldered lodges of the past", or to lead others to linger there. His untiring energy, his indomitable courage, his profound ecclesiastical statesmanship, are amply displayed to men in his present position, and are naturally appreciated more on the continent of Europe than by his own countrymen. There is perhaps no other member of the Sacred College whose great qualities are so generally recognized throughout the Catholic world. Is it in store for him to display those qualities in a still more exalted station?—*The World.*

CARDINAL CULLEN, ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN.

¶ Pius IX. gave to the Irish Church her first Cardinal—that is to say, he gave to the Irish Church a voice in all earthly councils, the councils that assemble to ask him the question Samuel asked when David was brought before him: "Is this the anointed here before the Lord?" When the question comes of selecting a Pope as the head of the Catholic Church, when the question comes of bringing out three or four men without any prior selection, asking the Holy Spirit of God—"Is this the anointed that is before Thee, Oh! Spirit of Truth?" That is the highest Council that can be upon earth, and for 1500 years every nation has been asked to join in that important question. Yet Ireland, faithful, suffering, never had been asked until Pius IX. said to an Irishman: "Take thy place, O child of a martyr race, among the Princes of the Church of God, and thou shalt be amongst those that shall ask the question of the Holy Spirit: 'Who shall guide this Church?' And if the answer come, 'The son of Erin?' then the son of Erin has the right to bear the Roman Tiara. And, in making his selection, the Pope pitched upon a man whom I have the honour and privilege of knowing intimately and well, and have lived in his jurisdiction for many a year. I have studied his spirit, and I will say this—I say it from the conviction of my heart—that in raising Paul Cullen, the Archbishop, to the dignity and the grandeur of a Cardinalship, Pius IX. laid his hand upon

the head of as true and as loving a son of Ireland as ever lived. Some deny this among us—a privilege that we claim to ourselves; but I do say this again—that if love for his native land ever burned pure and bright in the heart of man, it burns in thy heart, Cardinal Cullen, this night. He selected a man whom he knew would do honour to the land of his birth, and would fitly represent amongst the Cardinals of Rome and the representative Princes of the Church, the land which once bore the title of the "Island of Scholars as well as of Saints". I have studied the character of the eminent personage of whom I speak, and I have failed to decide in my own mind, from a minute, familiar examination of him—I have never been able to decide—which was the greater, the vastness of his ecclesiastical knowledge, or the humility of his pure heart and spirit. Honours have been worthily showered upon him; he has borne them with a humility corresponding with the greatness to which God has lifted him up. In the last Council of Rome it was the honour and glory of Ireland that our Cardinal stood forth acknowledged one of the greatest theologians—one of the first and wisest men—one of the deepest thinkers—one of the coolest and best heads in the eight hundred of the cream of the Church's intellect and heart, that were called and gathered there in the universal episcopacy.—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

THE POPE ON THE BED OF DEATH.

§ Everything connected with the dying moments of the Pope is invested with that solemnity and gravity suited to the high and holy office which during life he had fulfilled. His domestic Prelates, and the chief dignitaries of his household, are summoned around his bed. He then makes a profession of his faith, grants particular favours to all about him, requests their prayers, and receives from the hands of the sacristan Prelate the Holy Viaticum, and from the Cardinal Penitentiary a plenary indulgence. If his state will allow of it, he summons before him the College of Cardinals, in the presence of whom he renews his profession of faith. He recommends to them the Church of God, and engages them to select, as his successor, the person whom they believe most worthy to feed the "sheep" and the "lambs". The domestic Prelates remain at his bedside when he is in the agony of death, and the sacristan Priest recites the *recommendation of the departing soul*, and a part of the Passion. Scarcely has the Pope breathed his last, when the Cardinal Camerlingo, preceded by the Master of the Ceremonies, re-

pairs to the palace, and takes up his position at the foot of the bed on which the deceased Pope lies, his face covered with a white veil. The Cardinal kneels down and offers up a short prayer. He then stands up, and the attendants uncover the face of the Pope. The *Camerlingo* approaches the body, strikes three times the head of the deceased with a small silver hammer, and calls out his name three times. He then turns towards the assistants, and says: *The Pope is indeed dead.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. What is meant by St. Peter holding keys in his hand ?
2. How do you prove that the supremacy conferred on St. Peter descends to his successors ?
3. Quote the words of St. Leo and Bossuet in reference to the Primacy.
4. Why is a visible Head necessary for the Church ?
5. Do the Temporal possessions of the Pope contribute to the interests of religion ?
6. What says the Council of Soissons as to the Temporal dominions of the Pope ?
7. What are the words of Pius IX. as to the Temporal sovereignty of the Pope ?
8. By whom is the Pope elected ?
9. What is the origin of the name Cardinal ?
10. What relations do the Cardinals hold in regard to the Pope ?
11. Into how many orders are the seventy Cardinals divided ?
12. By whom were the Cardinals first presented with the red hat ? Who bestowed on them the title of Eminence ?
13. From what order of Ecclesiastics is the Pope selected ?
14. Is Holy Orders required to exercise Papal jurisdiction ?
15. If the Pope-elect be already a Bishop, does he require any further Consecration ?
16. Why does the Pope-elect lay aside his former name and assume another ?
17. Can the Pope resign his dignity and office ?

PRACTICE.

1. Always maintain the privilege of the Holy See, and never speak slightingly of the Pope as a temporal prince.

2. Be always prepared to uphold by argument the supremacy of the Pope.

PRAYER.

We return thee thanks, O Lord! for the many and illustrious privileges with which Thou hast invested the Pope; and we promise to submit, with cheerfulness, on every occasion, to his decisions, and to fulfil his wishes and desires. Amen.

CHAPTER XL.

ON BISHOPS, PARISH PRIESTS, AND VICARS.

Q. Who succeeded to the other Apostles?

A. The Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church.

1. St. Peter, prince of the Apostles, has had as successors the Popes—the Heads and Pastors of the entire Church. “The other Apostles” have had as successors the Bishops—Heads and Pastors of the particular Churches of which the Catholic Church is composed. Though the Church is governed by one sole Head, who is the Pope, yet, as it is impossible that the various functions of the pastoral ministry could be exercised through the entire Church immediately by the Pope himself, the different countries have been divided into many parts, called *Dioceses*. To govern each Diocese, a Priest, eminent for learning and sanctity, is chosen. The choice is made by the Pope—or, if not made by him, is confirmed by him—which gives to the Bishop-elect Canonical institution, and confers on him Jurisdiction over the territory assigned to him. The name Bishop, given to each head of a Diocese, is from the Greek word *επισκοπος*, formed from *επι*, upon, and *σκοπεω*, to look.

over or to inspect. The word has the same signification as inspector or superintendent.

2. "The Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church" are successors of the Apostles, inasmuch as they are invested with the same character, exercise in their respective Dioceses the same ordinary authority, and are the Heads and Pastors of the faithful under their jurisdiction. They do not, however, inherit all the privileges granted by Jesus Christ to the Apostles. They have not, like the Apostles, the gifts of tongues and miracles, nor the prerogative of Infallibility, nor the power of preaching and founding Churches throughout the entire world. Bishops are of *Divine right* —that is, it is God's appointment that there should be Bishops to second and aid the Pope in the government of the entire Church, and they inherit the authority conferred by Christ on the Apostles for the permanent government of the faithful throughout the nations, with due subjection to His Vicar, who holds paramount jurisdiction over all and each. Such is the meaning of these words of St. Paul: "The Holy Ghost hath placed you Bishops to rule the Church of God" (*Acts*, xx. 28). The Pope, therefore, has not the power of associating to himself only Vicars Apostolic to govern in his name, such and such parts of the Catholic world, because, though the establishment of a particular Diocese be not of *Divine right*, the institution of the Episcopal body enters into the intentions of Jesus Christ, and forms a part of the constitution of His Church.

3. Though Episcopal jurisdiction in general has been instituted by Jesus Christ; yet that Bishops may be enabled to exercise that jurisdiction, it is necessary that some particular territory should be assigned to them, and that they should be appointed, or their appointment should be confirmed by the Sovereign Pontiff. When Bishops are appointed, or when

their election is confirmed by the Holy See, they receive jurisdiction over all the faithful of the respective Dioceses to which they have been appointed. That jurisdiction is immediately conferred on them by the Pope, who makes them participators in the power of the keys which Jesus Christ gave to St. Peter, and in his person to his successors. "The Lord", says Tertullian, "has given the keys to St. Peter, and, through him, to the Church". "Jesus Christ", says St. Gregory of Nyssa, "has given, through Peter, to the Bishops, the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven". Peter alone has, then, received the keys to communicate the use of them to the other Pastors; and it is through Peter and his successors that Bishops hold the jurisdiction which they exercise in their respective Dioceses. It is Peter who has established them judges and Pastors.*

4. This doctrine has been declared in the most solemn manner by Pope Pius IX., who, in his famous Encyclical letter, dated 9th November, 1846, and addressed to the Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic world, speaks thus: "Come with an open heart and with full confidence to the See of the blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, the centre of Catholic unity, and the summit of the Episcopacy, WHENCE THE EPISCOPACY ITSELF DERIVES ITS ORIGIN AND ITS AUTHORITY". That Bishops may exercise the jurisdiction conferred on them, Episcopal consecration is not necessary; all that is required is, that their election should be confirmed by the Pope.†

5. Bishops receive directly and immediately from God the power essentially connected with Orders and the Episcopal character; and of this power they cannot be deprived by the Church. Though a Bishop should be convicted of heresy, and excommunicated, he has, by his Episcopal character, the power of administering Confirmation, conferring Holy Orders,

and validly consecrating. According to some theologians, it is God Himself immediately, and not the Pope, who confers jurisdiction on a Bishop as soon as his election has been duly confirmed by the Pope. But the opinion of those who say that the jurisdiction of the Bishop emanates immediately from the Pope, is supported by the most eminent Canonists, and appears to us the most reasonable opinion. For it is not easy to understand how a jurisdiction proceeding immediately from God can be restricted, and even taken away altogether, by the Pope. But such has been done by Pope Pius VII. in 1801.*

Q. Are all Bishops on an equality?

A. They are on an equality with regard to the Episcopal character, but the jurisdiction of some is more extended than that of others.

6. No one Bishop can claim, on account of his ordination, any superiority over any other Bishop; for what one receives all receive, because the effect of consecration is indivisible. Yet, there are many Bishops who exercise a power which others cannot; for some Sees are subject to other Sees. But this difference does not arise from Episcopal consecration, but only from the will of the Pope, who thinks it right to communicate to this or that Bishop a greater or lesser share of the *supreme authority, with which he is invested, over all the Churches.*

7. The Bishops who are invested with a greater or lesser authority over other Bishops, are Patriarchs, Metropolitans, and Archbishops. The word Patriarch, πατριάρχης, is derived from the Greek word πατρία, family, and ἄρχος, chief; and signifies the Sovereign father, the Chief father. In the early

* Papa, potest suspendere, omnem jurisdictionem, et officium episcovale epis copis (*Greg. VII. lib. v.*)

ages of the Church, the title of Patriarch was given to the titular Bishops of the Sees of the most important cities, as Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. The Patriarch of Rome has been always considered the universal Patriarch. The Bishops who presided over the capital cities of that empire were called Metropolitans, but in later times, Archbishops, that is Chief Bishops.†

8. We shall not in this *Catechetical* work enter into any observations in reference to the privileges which at different times were enjoyed by the Patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch, Constantinople, and Jerusalem. The principal thing to be known and remembered regarding these Patriarchal Churches is, that they are instituted by the Holy See, equally as those of later date; and that as the Pope can extend the jurisdiction of any Bishop, so, too, can he limit it, for the good of the Church. "Everything", says St. Leo, "which Jesus Christ has bestowed on the other Bishops, has been given through Peter". But what Peter has given to the Bishops, he can, without even observing the ordinary rules, take away, if the general good of religion demand that he should set himself above these rules. With regard to matters of discipline, and everything connected with the government of the Church, "*the Pope can do everything*", as Bossuet says, when necessity or very great utility requires it.

9. Whenever there is question of observing the Canons, and maintaining the laws of the Church, "*the power of the Pope*", says Fleury, "*is supreme and paramount*". But if, as a celebrated theologian, M. Emery, remarks, "*the authority of the Pope is supreme and paramount to everything, when there is question of maintaining the laws and observing the Canons of the Church, it must, too, be allowed that he is supreme and above everything, even the*

Canons, when there is question of the preservation of the Church, or of a notable part of the Church —as it is for the interest and support of the Church that the laws and Canons have been made". "Nothing is more in accordance with the Canons", says P. Thomas in, "than the violation of the Canons, when their violation will produce a greater good than their observance". Under ordinary circumstances the power of the Pope is limited by the Canons approved by him.

10. The Archbishops of the Eastern Church, if they enjoy the title of Patriarch, have even to-day a real supremacy over the Metropolitanans and the other Bishops of their Patriarchate. But that is not the case with regard to the Archbishops of the Western Church, no matter what their titles be. In former times Archbishops confirmed the appointment of the Bishops of their Provinces, who were called *Suffragans*. They, too, consecrated them and received their oath of obedience to the Holy See. But the same power that had granted them these privileges has since thought it well to deprive them of them. However, they still preserve the right of taking cognizance, by way of appeal, of the disputed affairs of their Metropolis or Province, of calling a Provincial Council, and of presiding at it. In everything else their supremacy is merely honorary.

Q. Besides the Pope and the Bishops, are there any other legitimate Pastors?

A. Yes; there are other lawful Pastors, called Parish Priests, who, subject to the Bishop, labour for the instruction and salvation of the faithful.

11. In the early ages of Christianity, there was only one Church in each city or town, in which the faithful assembled under the presidency of the Bishop. But when in process of time, the number of Christians had increased, and the Bishops were

unable to attend to the spiritual wants of the whole flock, Dioceses were divided into Parishes. The word parish is derived from the Greek *xapouia*, which is formed from *xapd*, near, and *oia*, a house, and means a near dwelling. According to some writers, Parish, *Parochia*, is derived from *partitione cura*, a division of care, responsibility, administration. The word Parish is applied to the union of many houses or many villages, the inhabitants of which assemble in a particular Church, called the Parochial church, to assist at the Holy Sacrifice and other duties of religion.

12. Each Parochial church is attended to by a Priest, called the parish Priest or Rector, who is entrusted with the spiritual guidance of the faithful living within the bounds of his parish, and is strictly obliged, from his office, to instruct the people in the way of salvation. In the early ages of the Church, Parishes were not governed by parish Priests or Rectors properly so called, but by Priests selected by the Bishops from among the Clergy, and who could be changed or recalled according to the good pleasure of the Bishop. But, during many years past, the Church has given a title to the Rectors of Parishes, by which they become irremovable. The Canon law is clear on this subject; and the Council of Trent has expressly declared it.* In former times there were a great many Parishes belonging to Monasteries and Chapters, and which were served by Vicars, who, as they were under ordinary circumstances irremovable, like parish Priests, were called perpetual Vicars. They were, however, sometimes

* Mandat Sancta Synodus episcopia, pro tutiori animarum illis commissarum salute, ut distincto populo in certas propriasque parochias, unicuique enim perpetuum pecuniarumque parochium assignent, a quo solo licite sacramenta suscipiant (Trid. Conc. Sess. xxiv. Cap. 13).

liable to be recalled at the will of the Bishop or of the Abbot.

Q. Has not every parish Priest certain defined rights, in his Church and in his Parish?

A. Yes; the Sacred Canons have given him these rights.

13. "Every parish Priest" has certain rights in his Church and in his Parish, which another Priest cannot exercise without his permission or the permission of the Bishop, who scarcely ever grants this permission against the will of the parish Priest, except for some urgent reasons. These rights, as conceded by the Canons of the Church, are: 1. To administer the Paschal communion to his parishioners; 2. To bless their marriages; 3. To baptize their children; 4. To administer to his parishioners who are in danger of death the Holy Viaticum and Extreme Unction; 5. To perform the rites of burial. There are certain other functions intimately connected with those rites just mentioned, the performance of which is confined to the parish Priest. These functions are: the blessing of candles on the feast of the Purification; the blessing of ashes on Ash-Wednesday; the blessing of palms on Palm-Sunday; the blessing of baptismal water on Holy Saturday and on the Vigil of Pentecost, and the churching of women after the birth of children.⁺

Q. Can parish Priests dispense in the laws of fasting and abstinence and in the observance of Sundays and Holidays?

A. They can; not, however, from an ordinary and inherent right, but from custom long since received.

14. The Canon law recognizes no right "in parish Priests" to dispense in the laws and precepts of the Church. That right belongs to an external forum; and parish Priests can exercise jurisdiction only in

an internal forum. However, from custom long since observed, they dispense in these laws, with regard to their parishioners (if there be good grounds for doing so), even should the parishioners experience no difficulty in having recourse to the Bishop.

Q. On whom do the Parish Priests depend in the exercise of the rights and functions of which we have already spoken?

A. They depend on the Bishop in the exercise of these rights and functions.

15. "Parish Priests" always perform the rights and functions of their office with subjection to the Bishop of the Diocese, from whom they receive their mission and jurisdiction, and who can restrict it, and in certain cases altogether deprive them of it, if the good of religion require it. The Bishop possesses the plenitude of the Priesthood. He has by Divine right—that is, by the institution of Jesus Christ—a superiority not only of precedence and of honour, but also of authority over all his Priests. He is the Pastor of his entire Diocese. He can preach whenever he pleases in all the Churches of his Diocese, even in those of Regulars; and can do in his own Diocese everything which the Pope can do in the entire Church, except what is reserved to the Pope. He can confer on this or that Priest jurisdiction more or less extended. He can, too, for good reasons, restrict the jurisdiction previously given by him, and withdraw it altogether if necessary. From what has been said it follows that a parish has three immediate pastors—the Pope, the Bishop, and the Parish Priest.*

Q. Who are the assistants of the Parish Priests?

A. Vicars or Coadjutors.

16. The word *vicar*, derived from two Latin words, *vices gerens*, means one who holds the place of an-

other, and who exercises certain functions in the absence of that other, or in his name. A Coadjutor is appointed to assist the Parish Priest in the duties of the parish, and in case the Parish Priest be absent, sick, or otherwise prevented from discharging the parochial duties, the care of the parish devolves on him. A Vicar or Coadjutor must not be confounded with a delegate. A delegate has no power to exercise licitly any special function except that particular one for which he has been specially appointed. He cannot transfer that duty to another. But a Vicar or Coadjutor is not appointed for the discharge of merely this or that duty, but for the discharge of all the parochial functions, *ad omnes causas*,* subject, however, to the regulations of the Bishop of the Diocese. He can, therefore, validly subdelegate another Priest to perform, for example, the rights of burial, or even to assist at the marriage of one of the parishioners, unless a special delegation by the Bishop or Parish Priest be deemed necessary for the Vicar or Coadjutor, with regard to his assisting at marriage.†

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE CATHOLIC HIERARCHY.

There is no unity of thought, much less intellectual obedience, outside the Catholic Church. But when we enter

* Delegatus ad universalitatem causarum subdelegare potest. Delegatus ad unam causam tantum, subdelegare non potest.—*In Cap. Cum Causam.*

† Hinc in Gallia Vicarii parochorum adjutores omnino censendi sunt ea potestate matrimonii valide assistendi instructi, nisi alicubi ab Episcopo vel parocho generalis eorum deputatio ad sacramenta *expresse* limitaretur, et *necessaria decernetur quoad matrimonia specialis delegatio*.—*Vide D Bouix, Tractatus de Parocho.*

her glorious halls and cross her golden thresholds, oh, how magnificent is the picture of unity that rises before the eyes of our souls ! There do we see two hundred millions of men, rich and poor, gentle and simple, intellectual and uneducated, highest and lowest ; and forth from these two hundred millions of lips and hearts comes one and the self-same note —the voice of faith and the praise of God. One sacrifice in every land ; one word in every country ; one testimony to the same faith ; and this brought down to us without the slightest contradiction for nearly two thousand years, since the day that Christ arose from the dead. Oh ! how magnificent is the image—how splendid the picture of unity that I contemplate, when, passing from the millions, I enter the sanctuary of the holy ones in the order of the hierarchy, the fittest, the brightest representation of the harmony of Heaven ! There the monk and the nun, consecrated, fill their own station and their own office. There we ascend from monk and nun, and we find the robed priest on the altar, and the preacher in the pulpit. Above them, again, higher in jurisdiction, in authority, approaching to the supreme head, we find the Bishops of the Church of God assembled in council, and eight hundred mitred heads taking thought, and expressing and testifying to the Church's faith. Higher still, we come to another order representing the clergy of Rome—the most ancient in the world, and the most honoured. Seventy Cardinals around the Papal throne—men who have received from the Church of God the extraordinary power to lay their hands on the anointed, and to designate the successor of St. Peter. Highest of all, seated upon his Pontifical throne, is the representative, the viceroy of God, holding the keys in one hand, holding the rod of jurisdiction in the other, and with one arm governing the whole flock of the Catholic Church, according to the word : “There shall be one fold and one shepherd”. Above him—for we must yet lift up our eyes from earth, for he is but a mere man—above him, but near him, standing close to him, upholding him, confirming him in faith, crowning him with the supremacy of the Church, the great Invisible Head whom the eye of Faith alone can behold in Peter and in Peter's successor—the Lord Jesus Christ—the true head —the one great fountain, pastor and ruler of the great Catholic Church. How great is that design, how grand is that order, how beautiful that harmony, how splendid that gradation from rank to rank, from order to order, from dignity to dignity, until all are concentrated upon one man on earth—because that one man represents the Invisible Head,

the Lord Jesus Christ. Behold unity! Behold the reflection of the divinity of God in its ineffable unity, shining forth in the beauty and in the harmony of our holy Church and our holy religion!—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI, BISHOP.

† St. Alphonsus, when Bishop of Agatha, experienced intense grief at the ignorance of the Christian doctrine exhibited by many of his people. To remove this ignorance, he made the most stringent and wisest regulations. Not satisfied with teaching the children himself, and insisting that the same duty should be performed in person by every Parish Priest of his Diocese, he composed a short compendium of the Christian doctrine, which he ordered to be read every Sunday at Mass, that adults might thus have an opportunity of learning the necessary truths of Christianity, without being put to the blush by being obliged to confess their ignorance. He made it a reserved case for parents to neglect sending their children to church to learn the Christian doctrine. He wished that all children should be prepared for their first communion from the age of ten to twelve, and that it should not be deferred any longer; and he made a law that every adult, no matter of what rank in life, should obtain from his Parish Priest, previous to his Easter Communion, a billet certifying that he was sufficiently instructed in the Christian doctrine, and without this no confessor was allowed to give him permission to receive the Paschal Communion.—*Life of St. Liguori, by Dr. Mullock.*

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, PARISH PRIEST.

† St. Vincent, when appointed Parish Priest of Clichy, a village situated a league from Paris, soon proved how well calculated he was for that onerous office. Sermons, catechisms, assiduity in the tribunal of penance, were his ordinary occupations. He was to be seen visiting the sick, consoling the afflicted, relieving the poor, restoring the peace of families, strengthening the weak, making himself all to all, to gain all to Jesus Christ. The most efficacious means, and that which gave the greatest weight to his discourses, was his good example. But as extreme regularity has in it something revolting, he tempered it by attention, by mildness, and affability. He painted virtue in colours so beautiful, that it appeared to be full of attractions, and he applied to the crosses, with which the road to heaven is strewed, all

the unction which can mitigate their asperity. Such prudent conduct conciliated all minds and hearts. The poor, who composed nearly his entire flock, loved him as their father; and the citizens of Paris, who had country seats in his parish, respected him as a saint. The neighbouring curates conceived the greatest esteem for him. They consulted him in their doubts, and took a pleasure in learning from him the manner of performing their functions well. In general it was enough to see him, to form the highest idea of him; and a learned Doctor, who in his time preached at Clichy, repeated more than once that his parishioners *universally lived like Angels*. On such occasions, the eulogium of the flock is always that of the vigilance of the Pastor and of his labours.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL, FOUNDER OF THE LAZARISTS.

§ St. Vincent put the sign of its stability upon his own great work in the three loves—the love of God, the love of the poor, and the love of the Church, when he founded his great order of the Vincentians or Lazarists, when he impressed upon them this triple spirit, and when in that day when the whole world seemed to forget us, poor Ireland was remembered, and she found her place in the all-embracing love of this great saint's heart. Ireland, in the days of Vincent, had made or was making her last great effort in defence of her religion. The Confederation of Kilkenny was formed; Catholic armies led by Catholic generals took their place on Irish battle fields. The issue of the battle went against them. The terrible sword of Cromwell waved over the land. All was death, destruction, confiscation, and misery, and it seemed as if Ireland had at length lain down to die. It was then, in the saddest epoch of misery in her history, that Vincent sent some of his first and most holy children to Ireland. "Go", he said, "and help to keep the sacred lamp burning in that land of faith—go, and if necessary add your blood to the blood so generously shed by that heroic people". They came, and were angels of consolation and light to us, and their care over us has never failed, for through every corner of the land their voices have been heard resounding the praises of Jesus and Mary, and implanting into the heart of Ireland more deeply those divine principles of grace with which Almighty God has so richly endowed us as a nation. And well do I remember in that western land—that western land which throws its mighty rocky mountains out to breast the Atlantic fury—well do I remember when famine passed over that land, when desolation and misery were everywhere in the

land, and Protestantism made its last desperate effort to enable the dark angel of heresy to enter through the same gate that let in the angel of God's apparent anger, the angel of famine, when they came with their gifts and offered the meats of heresy to a dying, a heart-broken, and a famishing people—and when that faith was imperilled, and when it seemed as if the strain put upon it was more than it could bear, when many had fallen shamefully, and it seemed as if Ireland was about to lose her last and only remaining treasure—well do I remember the Vincentian Fathers coming down to that western land, and, with powerful words and with holy, sacramental action, and with self-sacrificing labour, almost super-human, standing there and guarding that faith, bringing back the fallen, raising the renegade from his degradation, confuting the adversary, and putting to flight for ever the agents of heresy that dared invade our land for the corruption of our children who were dying of famine. The children of St. Vincent flourish to-day. Oh, my dearly beloved, in our own day, even in our own province, God has chosen a sister of St. Vincent de Paul to offer her virgin heart in martyrdom. There is one sister of Charity at any rate in heaven—a martyr crowned with a martyr's diadem. And surely she must look down on this fair church and you assembled here, for it is her brother who is saying the Mass.—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Why were Dioceses instituted?
2. In what way are the Bishops successors of the Apostles?
3. Are the Bishops dependent on the Pope as to their jurisdiction?
4. Is Episcopal consecration necessary for the exercise of jurisdiction?
5. From whom do Bishops receive jurisdiction?
6. Are some Bishops superior to other Bishops?
7. Can the Pope deprive a Bishop of jurisdiction?
8. By whom were Patriarchal churches instituted?
9. Is the authority of the Pope supreme and paramount?
10. What is the authority of Archbishops?
11. From what is the word parish derived?
12. Were there Parish Priests in the early ages of the Church?
13. What are the canonical rights of a Parish Priest?

14. Can Parish Priests dispense in the laws of the Church?
15. Are Parish Priests subject to their Bishops in the exercise of their functions?

PRACTICE.

1. Always bow with respectful submission to the command of the Bishop, for he has been appointed by God to rule over you.
2. Ever attend to the admonition of your Priests, and consult them on all your undertakings, for they have to render an account of your souls.
3. Willingly perform what your Pastor requires of you, and always look up to him as your spiritual guide and father.

PRAYER.

O good Jesus! grant us docile hearts, that we may, under all circumstances, strictly comply with the injunctions of those whom you have placed over us as our Pastors and guides. If hitherto we have contemned the commands of our spiritual superiors, and have disregarded their admonitions, we now regret it, and promise for the future to be tractable, and to follow invariably their wise and holy counsels. Amen

CHAPTER XLI.

ON THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE POPE.

Q. Can the Church err in what it teaches?

A. No; because Christ promised to the Pastors of His Church, "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (*Matt.*, xxviii. 20).

1. "The Church", dear children, cannot "err", nor lead others into error, "in what it teaches";

either with regard to faith or morals. This privilege of neither deceiving nor being deceived is what we understand by the infallibility of the Church. God, alone, of His own nature is infallible, for He is infinitely perfect; but when He commissions others to teach His doctrine, He can communicate to them the privilege of infallibility; and this He has actually done. When He was about sending His Apostles to announce His doctrine through the whole world, He said to them: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth; going, therefore, teach all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (*Matt.*, xxviii. 18, 19, 20). Christ, in these words, commissions His Apostles to go and teach "all nations", and tells them that He will be with them teaching to the end of the world. But Christ knew well that His Apostles could not "teach all nations" to the end of the world, for they were mortal men, whose lives could hardly be prolonged even for one century, not to say to the end of the world. When, therefore, He commissioned these first teachers to go and "teach all nations", His commission must be extended to their successors, the Bishops of the Church, for with them it was that He was to be "even to the consummation of the world". Christ says He has "all power", and so He can make His teachers infallible. He sends them to "teach all nations" true and no erroneous doctrine. "I am with you all days", He says; and for what purpose? Certainly for the purpose of preserving His Church, at all times and in every age, from teaching even the slightest error, for the purpose of always aiding and enlightening and guiding her into all truth. Hence, as Jesus Christ will be always with His Church, she will be for ever the faithful interpreter of His will, and as such she

can never teach error, but will always be infallible in the doctrine and morals inculcated by her.

Q. Why did Christ promise always to remain with His Church ?

A. That He Himself, directing and assisting by His Holy Spirit the Pastors of His Church, might teach all ages and nations.

2. Christ promised to remain always with "the Pastors of His Church", that He might assist them by the continual protection of His overruling providence in the great work of teaching the people. The people are commanded to receive the faith from their Pastors, and to believe what they teach ; and so stringent is this command, that Christ pronounces those who will not hear them as "heathens and publicans". As, then, the faith of the people depends upon the Pastors, and as the people are bound to hear them, Christ promised to be always with the Pastors, directing their counsels and dictating their decisions and decrees, that they may never alter or corrupt His true doctrine, but teach it whole and undefiled to "all nations". Christ is always with His Church, and under His immediate guidance she performs her great work of instructing, correcting, and directing mankind in the way of salvation, and preparing souls for heaven.

Q. What else did Christ promise to His Church ?

A. That the gates of hell should not prevail against it (*Matt.*, xvi. 18).

3. Christ said to St. Peter, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates

of hell shall not prevail against it (*Matt.*, xvi.). Christ, in addressing these words to the Apostle, made him the foundation-stone of His Church, and declared that, built upon him, it would for ever remain firm and unshaken to the end of the world : and though persecutions may be raised against it and heresies, and schisms, and domestic scandals should arise up in its bosom, still that “the gates of hell”—the united powers of Satan—“should not prevail against it”. By “the gates of hell”, our Lord meant the infernal powers—the devil and the agents that may be employed by that spirit of darkness and lying to subvert the Church of God. The tyrants of the earth may rage with fury against that Church ; Heresies may start up in various forms to distract her ; the vicious lives of many of her children may disgrace the character of their Christian profession ; they may violate her laws, they may insult her authority and invade her sanctuary, but they never will be able to overturn her ministry, to shake her hierarchy, or to alter in the least her doctrine. The Catholic Church has now been in existence for more than eighteen centuries, and the storms of persecution which have, from time to time, been raised against her, so far from weakening, have only strengthened the sacred edifice, because it has been supported by the all-powerful hand of God. The Divine promise has been given to it, that it shall continue to the end of time, and that no power of earth or hell shall subvert it. “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it”, and that promise will be fulfilled to the end of time

Q. Have you any other texts of Scripture to prove that the Church of Christ is infallible?

A. Yes, many ; and also passages from the Holy Fathers in support of that doctrine.

4. Our Lord, in addressing His Apostles, says : " He that heareth you, heareth Me ; and he that despiseth you, despiseth Me" (*Luke*, x. 16). According to these words of Christ, those who hear the Apostles and their successors, hear Himself ; but the teaching of Christ must be infallible teaching, for Christ cannot deceive ; therefore the teaching of the Pastors of the Church—the successors of the Apostles—must be infallible, as hearing them is hearing Christ. St. Paul calls the Church "the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth" (*I. Tim.*, iii. 15). But if she be the Church of the living God, she certainly cannot err ; and if she be "the pillar and ground of truth", it is impossible that she could teach idolatry, or superstition, or anything not in accordance with the truth of God. Again, St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, describes the Church as "a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing ; but that it should be holy and without blemish" (*Eph.*, v.). But the Church could not be holy and without "spot or wrinkle", if she were not exempt from error ; nor could Christ sanctify her or render her holy, without, at the same time, giving her the privilege of infallibility. "Take heed to yourselves", says the same Apostle to the Pastors of the Church, "and to your whole flocks, wherein the Holy Ghost has placed you as Bishops to rule the Church of God". But the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of truth, would not place Bishops over the Church to guide and direct its children, if they were capable of teaching error or inculcating false doctrine.

5. St. Irenæus, who lived in the second century, says : "God appointed in His Church Apostles, Prophets, and Doctors ; where, therefore, the holy gifts of God are, there must be taught the truth" (*Adversus H̄eres.*, L. iv. c. 45). St. Augustin, in

the fifth century, says: "I would not believe the Gospel if I had not the authority of the Church for its truth" (*Contra Epist. Fund.*). And, again, he says: "The authority of our Sacred book is confirmed by the consent of nations, through the succession of Apostles, Bishops, and Councils" (*Contra Faust*). If it be necessary for the preservation of Christian society, that there should be an authority to rule it, it is no less necessary that this authority should be infallible; for if such authority were not infallible, the end for which it had been established could not be fulfilled. If there were no infallible authority to rule the Church, we could have no guarantee for purity and soundness of doctrine, and every moment there would be good grounds to apprehend the extinction of the faith, and the spread of darkness over the light of truth. But an all-wise God has secured us against this danger, by the infallible speaking authority established by Him for the support of Christianity and the teaching of true doctrine. Heresies may, indeed, as they have done before, spring up in the Church, but they can never infect the body of the Church, or destroy its characteristic mark of *truth*, for the Church will condemn, as she has often done before, whatever false and pernicious doctrine may be broached by any of her children.*

Q. In whom does the infallibility properly reside?

A. In the body of Pastors united to their Head.

6. The commission given by Christ in these words: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, . . . teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world" (*John, xxviii. 20*), regards all the Apostles. They

were not addressed to the Apostles separate from St. Peter, but to the entire Apostolic college and their successors in the ministry—the Pope and the Bishops of the Church. The Bishops of the Church, united with the Pope, their Head, are, from the words of Christ, infallible in their teaching. When the Bishops of the Church are called together by the Pope, in a general Council, in order to decide on matters of religion, whether regarding faith or morals, they are, when so assembled, infallible in their decisions, and their decrees are considered as dictated by the Holy Ghost. Of this we have example in the Council held by the Apostles at Jerusalem, in which they began their decree in these words: “It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us” (*Acts*, xv.). When the Pope, without calling together the Bishops of the Church, publishes any Decree concerning faith or morals, and if this decree be accepted and received by the body of the Bishops, either expressly or tacitly, it then becomes a Decree of the whole Church, and the Church is as infallible with regard to that Decree, as if she had met in a General Council.

Q. Has Jesus Christ made promise of infallibility to St. Peter alone, and in his person to his lawful successors?

A. Yes; Christ has endowed St. Peter and his successors with the privilege of infallibility.

7. The promise of infallibility had been made by Jesus Christ first to St. Peter alone; and the effect of that promise subsists independently of that which had been afterwards promised to all the Apostles assembled. Whence it follows that if the Supreme Pontiff publishes any decree concerning faith or morals, to which he requires submission from all the faithful, both Pastors and people should obey the decree, and believe what the Head of the Church

teaches, without the least apprehension of their being misled, for in this respect he is infallible. This is now proposed as an Article of Faith, for the Church, assembled in 1870 in General Council, in St. Peter's, Rome, called the Council of the Vatican, made a doctrinal decision regarding it.†

8. That the Pope is infallible in what he teaches, when he speaks to all the faithful as Head of the Church, can be proved from the words addressed by Christ to St. Peter, and in his person to his successors. Jesus Christ said to St. Peter, whom He constituted Head of the Church : "Thou art Peter (that is a rock), and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (*Matt.*, xvi. 18). Now, from this text we have already clearly proved that the Church is always infallible in teaching the true faith ; and the grounds of this proof are given by Christ Himself, when He says that the firmness and stability of the "wise man's" house against all storms and tempests, winds and rains, was precisely owing to this, "for it was founded on a rock" (*Matt.*, vii. 25), that is, on a solid and immovable foundation. But as St. Peter, as Head of the Church, is the rock, under Christ, on which she is built, and as she is infallible because built on a rock, it follows that the foundation itself must be infallible also.

9. Our Lord said also to St. Peter : "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat ; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not, and thou, being converted, confirm thy brethren" (*Luke*, xxii. 32). In these words of our Lord, we find that Christ prayed for St. Peter in particular that his faith should not fail. But Christ's prayer was always heard by His Father, as He Himself tells us when He prayed to His Father to raise Lazarus from the dead : "Father.

I give Thee thanks that Thou hast heard Me, and I know that Thou hearest Me always" (*John*, xi. 41). Therefore the prayer that Peter's faith should not fail was certainly heard also, and consequently St. Peter, as Head of the Church, and his lawful successors in that office, shall never fail in faith, nor teach false doctrine. "I have prayed for thee", says Christ, and in consequence of my prayer, you shall be confirmed in the faith, and when you are so, "confirm your brethren". Now, this very commission of confirming others necessarily pre-supposes that the prayer of Christ was heard, by which Peter was confirmed in the faith himself; for how could he confirm his brethren in the faith if he himself could be capable of erring in matters of faith? It cannot be urged against this argument of St. Peter's infallibility, that on the very night after the promise was made him he had miserably fallen by denying his Master. The promise that his faith should not fail was made to him, not as a private person, but as the head of the Church; and, like all other promises made to the Church itself, it was not to take effect till the coming of the Holy Ghost, who was to be sent to establish the Church, and fulfil all the promises made to her by Christ, and for that purpose to "to abide with her for ever".

Q. Can you adduce any proofs of the infallibility of the Pope from tradition?

A. Yes; from the testimonies of the Holy Fathers, from the very earliest ages, which show that this was the belief of the Church in their days.

10. In the third century, Origen, a celebrated writer, explaining the text, "Thou art Peter", says: "It is true, though not said expressly, that neither against Peter, nor against the Church, shall the gates of hell be ever able to prevail; for if they

could prevail against Peter, on whom the Church is founded, they would also prevail against the Church". St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in the second age, confutes all Heresies and all false doctrine from the authority of the Holy See alone. "To this Church all must have recourse", he says; "for in her the Apostolical tradition is always preserved". St. Augustin says, when the Pelagian heresy was condemned by the Pope: "The answer of Rome is come; the cause is ended". And in his Psalm against the Donatist schismatics, he says to them: "Come, brethren, if you have a mind to be ingrafted in the vine. 'T is a pity to see you lie in this manner, lopped off from the stock. Reckon up the Prelates in the very See of Peter, and in that order of Fathers see which has succeeded which. This is the rock against which the proud gates of hell prevail not".

Q. Can you bring forward any arguments from reason in support of the infallibility of the Pope?

A. Yes; proofs from reason which are founded on facts, and on principles received by all members of the Church as Divine truths, can be adduced in support of the infallibility of the Pope.

11. There never was an instance of any Pope who proposed any doctrine to be believed by the Church that was contrary to the sacred truths of faith revealed by Christ; for though there have been a few, and only a few Popes, that were bad men in practice, yet the greatest enemies of the Catholic faith could never yet show that any Pope ever taught bad doctrine. Never yet did any Pope enact a Decree concerning the truths of faith or sound morality, but it was immediately received by the great body of the Bishops as containing the most solemn and wholesome doctrine. Again, many different Heresies

that have arisen in different ages in the Church have been proscribed and condemned by the authority of the Head of the Church alone, both before the first General Council was held, and since. Moreover, in all the controversies of importance that have arisen in the Church about points of faith, the Bishops have always had recourse to the Head of the Church as the supreme Tribunal for settling them ; and if the obstinacy of the party condemned by him made it advisable to have recourse to General Councils, these Councils never were found to do anything else, after the most mature examination, except to confirm the sentence already passed by the Head.

12. Tournely, a French divine, who was by no means a supporter of the doctrine of the Pope's Infallibility, makes the admission, that if a division among the Bishops should happen about any point of faith, "we should, without doubt, adhere to that part which is united with the Head, which is always to be esteemed the better and sounder part". Muzzarelli, a celebrated writer on the Infallibility of the Pope, says : "Our divine Redeemer, in addressing those words to Peter, 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and thou being converted, confirm thy brethren'", constituted him a Teacher, for He charged him with the instruction and guidance of his brethren ; and this dignity conferred on the Head of the Church, is recognized by all the Councils, and in particular by the Council of Florence. But if the Pope be fallible, his dignity of Teacher is not of the slightest use to himself, to us, nor to the Church. Rather it would be a dignity without sense or meaning, and a title as ridiculous as that of Doctor conferred in some university on an unlettered peasant, who expected on that account that he should meet with respect from every one. Such a Doctor we neither could receive nor

reasonably hear, for his title could not remove his ignorance. Let the University confer on him, if it can, knowledge together with the title, and then we shall respectfully listen to him, and admire his decisions. Would not that be what you would naturally say? Well, then, I say the same thing in regard to the Pope. If he has not received that infallibility corresponding with his dignity of Teacher, I respect him as a Pope, but not as a Doctor".*

Q. Cannot the decision of the Pope, with regard to faith and morals, be reversed by the Bishops dispersed through the entire Church?

A. No; such a thing is impossible.

13. As we have already seen, infallibility had been at first promised to Peter alone, and then to the entire college of Apostles, Peter included. Hence we must conclude that when the Pope, and the Bishops dispersed through the entire Church, are agreed in condemning a certain doctrine, or in proposing any truth as a dogma of Catholic faith, their decision must be free from error. It is in this sense that we say that the Church dispersed is infallible. But on the supposition that the Pope decides in one way a question concerning faith and morals, and that the Bishops decide in a different way, on what side will the truth be found? We answer without the slightest misgiving—on the side of him to whom Jesus Christ has said in the person of Peter: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith may not fail". If the judgment of Bishops could reverse that of the Pope, the consequence would be, that he who is charged with confirming his brethren in the faith would be himself confirmed in his faith by his brethren, and that at the very time when the brethren would forfeit all claim to their share of infallibility by separating themselves from their Head.

14. Besides, we cannot for a moment entertain the supposition that the voice of the Pope should remain as it were isolated and distinct from the voice of all the Bishops. Has not Jesus Christ said, that the sheep should hear the voice of the pastor, and that there should be only "one sheepfold and one shepherd"? And at His last supper did He not pray to His eternal Father for the entire Church—for all the Apostles—for all those who should believe in Him, "that they should be all one", as His Father is in Him, and as He is in His Father? Moreover, the Pope has not for a single instant ceased to be the foundation-stone of the Church; but he would no longer be the foundation-stone if all the bishops dissented from the voice of Peter, for an isolated stone could not be a foundation-stone. Again, the Pope would no longer be Pastor if the Bishops dissented from him, for the pastor supposes a flock; but he could have no flock in the event of a rupture between himself and the Bishops.

15. The only supposition that can be made—and that is not a chimerical one—is the case of the Pope with a number of Bishops on one side, and a number of Bishops without the Pope on the other side. Where rests the infallibility then? Where is the Church? St. Ambrose answers the questions in four words: *Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia*—WHERE PETER IS, THERE IS THE CHURCH. Just so; where the successor of Peter is, there is the Church. It, too, may happen that a part of the Bishops should acquiesce, though silently, in the judgment of the Pope, and that another part of them should openly reclaim against it. In this latter case, where would the infallibility rest, or where would the Church be found? In that portion of the Bishops united to the Pope, according to the rule of St Ambrose: *Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia*—WHERE PETER IS, THERE IS THE CHURCH *

16. The judgment of the Pope cannot, then, in any case be reversed by the Bishops dispersed through the entire Church, because, together with the reasons which have been just assigned, it would be out of all order that the sheep should guide the pastor, and point out the road in which he should walk. Moreover, the Gallican divines admit that when the Pope has spoken, the faithful should receive his decisions with respect, and conform to them, at least provisionally. "But", as the learned Muzzarelli well says, "if the Pope be not infallible, he is liable to err in his decisions, and in that case I can and ought to examine them, in order to be assured of the truth; and if his decisions appear to me contrary to Scripture, to the Councils, to the Fathers, even to reason, I can, and I even ought, to believe the contrary". Hence he concludes that the Gallican theologians are inconsistent in their principles.†

Q. Cannot the judgment of the Pope be reversed, at least by Bishops assembled in general Council?

A. No; not more than it can be reversed by the Bishops dispersed through the entire Church.

17. The Pope being infallible, as we have already proved, his judgment is irreversible. To assert that his decision can be reversed by the Bishops assembled in general Council, in the name of Jesus Christ, is to advance a proposition that cannot, under any respect, be supported. For the Pope either forms a part of the Council or he does not. If he does not form part of it, the Council, by that very fact, is wanting in a condition essential to its being general; for if the head of the Church does not belong to the Council, the universal Church cannot be represented by it, and the decree of the Bishops composing it is not the decree of the Church, but only the decree of its members. If, on the other hand, the Pope forms

a part of the Council, and that the Bishops separate themselves from, and place themselves in opposition to him, from that very moment their judgment ceases to be infallible, for no promise of infallibility has been made by Jesus Christ to Bishops separated from their Head and Pastor.

18. The judgment of the Pope reversed by that of a General Council! Why, it is altogether opposed to reason, and to the design of Jesus Christ, that the members should rule the Head—that the edifice should support the foundation—that the flock should guide the shepherd. And this would just happen if the Pope decided in one way and the Bishops in another; for their decision would outweigh that of the Pope—their Head and Pastor. Has he then less authority over them when assembled in Council than when dispersed through the world? Has he just then ceased to be the person to whom Jesus Christ said, “Feed my lambs, feed my sheep, confirm my brethren in the faith”? The judgment of the Pope reversed by that of the Bishops assembled in General Council! Do not all theologians hold that the decrees of Bishops cannot be considered the decrees of a General Council, except they be confirmed by the Pope? But in case the Bishops stand in opposition to the Pope, there can be no confirmation by him of their proceedings; and how, then, can the decrees of Bishops oblige the Pope to reverse his decree?

19. Besides, it has never happened, nor will it ever happen, that in a General Council all the Bishops should separate themselves from the Pope, and send forth a decree contrary to his, for the promises concerning unity would prevent it. But should it ever happen that in a Council, the Pope, with some of the Bishops, should decide in one way, and the rest of the Bishops should decide in a different way, on what side then would be the truth? On what side would

be found infallibility? We answer, as we have answered before, on the side of the Pope, because WHERE PETER IS, THERE IS THE CHURCH—*ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia.**

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH.

*God governs the Church through the Pope; therefore there is no appeal from the Church, and it has been the recognized doctrine of the Catholic Church, from the day she was founded to this hour, that there is no appeal from the Pope, the Pope being the foundation stone of the Church, for Christ our Lord founded her upon a rock. But is that rock Peter? The Apostle says, "The rock was Christ", and the rock was Christ—the broad, eternal, Godlike Foundation of the Catholic Church—and upon His divine bosom He planted the visible rock, who was Peter, saying, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church". Peter was the rock set upon Christ; for, says St. Paul, "The Church is founded on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, the great corner-stone Himself being Christ Jesus Our Lord". The Church cannot fail until Peter fails—until Peter fails in his successor. Peter cannot fail until Christ fails; Christ is God, and cannot fail. Therefore, the Church of God shall live for ever, and the gates of hell and our enemies shall never prevail against her. Kingdoms and empires may pass away, human greatness is but the dream of him who dreameth until morning. Men may come and men may go, but the Church stands for ever. Human weakness may reveal itself, as it does every day, in the old forms of detestable sin and crime. Society may groan under its own miseries and its murders, its impurities, its abortions, its dishonesties, and men may cry out in their despair, as they cry in the daily press, "When shall this end? When shall we have justice, purity, and honesty?" The blind fools don't recognize the fact that no blood, no impurity, no dishonesty, no sin can ever be tolerated by the Church of God or approach the Catholic Church. And she alone is the

* All controversy in reference to the infallibility of the Pope is now set aside by the doctrinal decree, passed in the year 1870, in the Vatican Council—*finita est causa.*

saviour of society, because she alone in her dogmas can create what the world is crying out for in this our day. The world may divide itself, as it does, into a thousand schools of philosophy, a thousand schemes and systems of varying opinion or religion. That is what is called in this our day "religion". There is no unity in that world; and yet men are blind, willingly blind enough not to perceive the magnificent unity, second only to the essential unity of God, which guides the concils, animates the words, and personifies the obedience of the Catholic Church. Well, my friends, if you consider these things you will be obliged to conclude, even if you are not Catholics—I don't know whether there are any here to-night who are not Catholics—you will be obliged to conclude that there must be something divine in the religion which captivates the intelligence of two hundred millions of men, and which makes that intelligence as of one mind and as one man in its expression of religious belief. It touches with a sanctifying hand every form of sin: and by destroying sin, changes the sinner into the child of God. Beginning with the Sacrament of Baptism, it goes on to the Sacrament of Penance, and from that to the Holy Communion, until it finally wipes away the very latest miseries and fears, which will attach themselves to the simplest and holiest, by the consoling and sanctifying Sacrament of Extreme Unction. There must be something divine in a church that has been able to stand for nearly two thousand years, that has never allowed any political or philosophical question to go without examining it and judging of it; that has never feared to take up any inquiry of science; ready to meet every inquirer, give him his answer and prove it to him. This Catholic Church never dies; never knows how to die; never grows old; never knows the day of dissolution. And the Church alone, like unfallen man, will pass from its militant state to the triumphant, and will reign as the Church of God for ever and ever in heaven.

What wonder, then, that she stands? Stands! Oh, so glorious, as she has stood in Ireland for fifteen hundred years! Cast to the earth, robbed of her possessions, driven into the fastnesses of the land, having nothing to subsist upon but the undying faith and love of the grand old Celtic race who turned to her in the day of her sorrow, and swore their allegiance to her for life.

Thy rival was honoured as thou wert wronged and scorned;
Thy crown was of briars, whilst gold her brows adorned;
She wood me to temples whilst thou layest hid in caves;
Her friends were all masters whilst thine, alas, were slaves;
Yet, cold in the earth at thy feet I would rather be
Than wed what I love not, or turn one thought from thee

Thus did Ireland speak to the Catholic Church. What wonder that she should stand whom Omnipotence had built up? They tried to build a temple in Jerusalem after God had thrown it down, and when they came to examine the ancient foundations and build them up again, and restore the Jewish religion, flames of fire burst out from those stones and consumed the impious ones, whereon St. John Chrysostom made this significant remark: "Behold the temple of Jerusalem—God has pulled it down, and no man could rebuild it. Behold the Catholic Church—God has built her up, and no man can pull her down". If further argument were wanting—if testimony of Father or of saint were wanting, if the martyrs of other lands did not attest from their ensanguined graves the immortality of the principle for which they died, Ireland alone—Ireland alone, rising in all her virgin beauty from out the clasping waves of the western sea—Ireland with her fifteen hundred years of sanctity and martyrdom and glory upon her brows, would be a grand, and is a grand and insurmountable argument of the vitality and the eternity of her religion. Every agency that could destroy a principle was brought to bear upon Ireland's religion. For three hundred years the Danes swept the land with fire and sword, yet as often as they strove to strike down in the heart of Ireland her love for her holy religion and her altars, they strove in vain. For three hundred years again every agency and engine of persecution was at work—confiscation, proscription of knowledge, infidel education, legal and civil penalties of every kind, exile, imprisonment, death—all, all have swept over the glorious and time-honoured Church of Ireland, all have swept over her, and to-day her enemies have laid her rival disestablished and shattered at her feet, while the glorious Church raises her head once more like one of the imperishable columns on her hills. The same in faith, the same in beauty, the same in energy as when her great Apostle waved his last blessing to her with his dying hand, here she stands, the Tower of David, a thousand shields hanging upon her, all the armour of valiant men, the shield of the King and the bard and the missionary and the martyr; the nation in her shadow as of old, her faithful Hierarchy manning her walls as of old, waving the ancient sign of the Cross in blessing over her, and around her, scattered out on the wild bleak fields where they perished, the blanching and bleaching bones of every adversary that ever dared to draw the sword or raise his hand against the Church of God—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

† As the doctrine of Papal Infallibility, writes an eminent divine, is strangely misapprehended by our separated brethren, because it is grievously misrepresented by those who profess to be enlightened ministers of the Gospel, I shall begin by stating what Infallibility does not mean, and shall then explain what it really is.

1st, The Infallibility of the Popes does not signify that they are inspired. The Apostles were endowed with the gift of inspiration, and we accept their writings as the revealed word of God. No Catholic, on the contrary, claims that the Pope is inspired, or endowed with the divine revelation, properly so called. "For the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of St. Peter in order that they might spread abroad new doctrine which He reveals, but that, under His assistance, they might guard inviolably, and with fidelity explain, the revelation or deposit of faith handed down by the Apostles".

2nd, Infallibility does not mean that the Pope is impeccable, or specially exempt from liability to sin. The Popes have been indeed, with few exceptions, men of virtuous lives; many of them are honoured as martyrs. Seventy-nine out of the two hundred and fifty-nine that sat on the chair of Peter are invoked upon our altars as saints eminent for their holiness. The avowed enemies of the Church impeach only five or six Popes of immorality. Thus, even admitting the truth of the accusations brought against them, we have forty-three virtuous to one bad Pope, while there was a Judas Iscariot among the twelve Apostles. But although a vast majority of the sovereign Pontiffs should have been so unfortunate as to lead vicious lives, this circumstance would not of itself impair the validity of their prerogatives, which are given not for the preservation of their morals, but for the guidance of their judgment: for, there was a Balaam among the Prophets, and a Caiphas among the High Priests of the Old Law. The present illustrious Pontiff is a man of no ordinary sanctity. He has already filled the highest position in the Church for upwards of thirty years, "a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men", and no man can point out a stain upon his moral character. And yet Pius IX., like his predecessors, confesses his sins every week. Each morning, at the beginning of Mass, he says at the foot of the altar: "I confess to Almighty God, and to His saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word, and deed". And

at the Offertory of the Mass he says : " Receive, O Holy Father Almighty, everlasting God, this oblation which I, Thy unworthy servant, offer for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences". With these facts before their eyes, I cannot comprehend how ministers of the Gospel betray so much ignorance, or are guilty of so much malice, as to proclaim from their pulpits, which ought to be consecrated to truth, that Infallibility means exemption from sin. I do not see how they can benefit their cause by such flagrant perversion of truth.

3rd, Bear in mind, also, that this divine assistance is guaranteed to the Pope, not in his capacity as a private teacher, but only in his official capacity, when he judges of faith and morals as Head of the Church. If a Pope, for instance, like Benedict XIV., were to write a treatise on Canon Law, his book would be as much open to criticism as that of any Doctor of the Church.

4th, The inerrability of the Popes, being restricted to questions of faith and morals, does not extend to the natural sciences, such as astronomy or geology, unless where error is presented under the false name of science, and arrays itself against revealed truth. It does not, therefore, concern itself about the nature and motions of the planets ; nor does it regard purely political questions, such as the form of government a nation ought to adopt, or what candidates we ought to vote for. Consequently, the Pope's Infallibility does not in any way trespass on the civil authority ; for the Pope's jurisdiction belongs to spiritual matters, while the duty of the state is to provide for the temporal welfare of its subjects.

What, then, is the real doctrine of Infallibility ? It simply means that the Pope, as successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, by virtue of the promises of Christ, is preserved from error of judgment when he promulgates to the Church a decision of faith or morals.

The Pope, therefore, be it known, is not the maker of the divine law ; he is only its expounder. He is not the author of revelation, but only its interpreter. All revelation came from God alone through His inspired ministers, and was complete in the beginning of the Church. The Holy Father has no more authority than you or I to break one iota or tittle of the Scripture ; and he is, equally with us, a servant of the divine law.—*Right Rev. Dr. Gibbon.*

INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

¶ Never in the history of the Pontiffs of the Church of God has there been an act of such supreme prevision as the act of the last Council of Rome, when the whole Church of God, assembled and represented by its eight hundred bishops, declared as a dogma of the Catholic faith, that the Pope possessed infallibility as the Head of the Church. Let me prove this. When that definition was pronounced, and after the old original acknowledged faith of the Catholics was put in the form of a dogma—an article of faith—how few thought of what has come to pass since the day when definition was defined—when your Bishops and all the Bishops of the world were assembled. I was there at the time. I witnessed everything. I never thought that the Pope was near the loss of his temporal dominions; no Bishop or Cardinal thought it. We could not understand the whole thing; we could not understand why that Council was called and pressed so by the Pope himself. We did not foresee that a Bismarck would arise, like another Anti-Christ, to persecute the Church of God; we did not foresee the downfall of France, and the triumphant revolution of Italy, with the deprivation of the temporal power of the Pope, and the possible expulsion of the person of his successor from Rome. These things no man foresaw, except one; no man saw what was coming; but a prudence more than human prepared the Church for the emergency. For two thousand years the Pope has been in Rome. Surrounded by the prestige of his temporal power, he represented, as Pontiff of Rome, palpably and visibly, the Church of God. He was recognized by the whole Church. It was easy to know him, easy to find him; he was like a light burning in a candlestick, lighting up everything. The kings of Europe recognised him. But take him out of Rome, send him an exile amongst men, send him a stricken wanderer on the earth, without the prestige of his temporal power—perhaps limited by those diabolical persecutors, those crowned tyrants—those kings, prime ministers, warring against the Church: then would come ruin and confusion in His Church. The Bishops might be tempted to rebel. The Church is full of examples of Bishops who have from time to time rebelled against the Pope. Now, when the storm was coming, the spiritual authority of the Pope was put in form and recognized directly as from God. His infallible authority from God is required to be the very central bond of the Church in the days of her weakness that has come upon her.

Almighty God inspired this man with the thought that the moment had come for the Church to commit herself to set that sign upon her Pontiff, which, wherever he is, in exile or in misery, no other man can tear away—the sign of his personal infallibility, dogmatically recognized in the head of the Catholic Church. He now can enforce his decrees—they are the *Curia Romana*. He cannot now, as in the Middle Ages, call a secular army to enforce his decrees. He cannot now lean on the loyalty of King or Kaiser. They have all turned against him; all are his enemies. Yet the moment when every human aid, when every human faculty, every human prestige was withdrawn from him, the Heavens were opened, and the dogma of Infallibility was let down upon his head from the bosom of Jesus Christ, the God of truth. Accepted by the Church, acclaimed by the Church, it shines out upon the uncrowned head of the Church's Monarch, Pius IX., as the grandest Pope that ever lived and received the recognition of the Holy Church of God, as alike dogmatically of his Infallibility as her Head. Now, he may go from Rome to-morrow, and he may go and hide himself in any corner of the earth—now he may go, pursued by the bloodhounds of tyranny and revolution—but now, at least, we know that when he speaks to the Church, no Prince, no nation, no Bishop can for an instant cavil at his decision without inheriting the wrath of God and the curse of heresy and separation from the Catholic Church. Some people imagine that the Pope is impeccable—that the Pope cannot make a mistake. He is not impeccable. The Pope may tell a thousand lies, but there is one thing he cannot do—he cannot tolerate a lie, or command the Catholic Church to believe a lie. Understand me well. This is a question not understood in our day. Some, especially Protestants, imagine that when we talk of Papal Infallibility, we mean that the Pope can do no wrong. The Pope can do as much wrong as you or I. The Pope goes to confession every week like every other Priest. If he does not go there sorry for his sins, and making up his mind to renounce them, and does not perform his penance, he may be lost like any other man. But remember, we are not talking of him now as an individual, as a person, a mere man, but as the Head of the Catholic Church. As the supreme pastor, as the supreme ruler of the Church, the first attribute that belongs to him is that he cannot command the Catholic Church to believe a lie; therefore, he cannot tell a lie to the Church in his capacity—speaking *ex Cathedra*—that is, from the throne of Peter as head of the Church. And this stands to reason,

my friends, for the Catholic Church is bound to accept the Pope's words when he speaks as head of the Church; she is bound to bear allegiance to him, and to take the laws from his lips. There is no appeal from him, when the Pope speaks and says that is the doctrine of the Catholic Church on such and such a point. The Catholic Church has always taught she is bound to obey the word of her head, her Pontiff; therefore, the Pontiff, when he is teaching that Church, cannot teach her a lie, for if she did, the Catholic Church would be bound to accept a lie, for Christ, our Lord, has said, "I am God, and the gates of hell shall never prevail against her". Therefore, though a traitor be the Head of the Church, he cannot teach the Church of God or command her to believe a lie. Every state, my friends, every nation has its ultimate tribunal, from which there is no appeal. For instance, if you go to law with a man in England or in Ireland, if the judges decide against you, you can appeal to a higher court, and if a higher court give it against you, you can appeal to the House of Lords, and if the House of Lords be against you, you are bound to submit—there is no other appeal. And so here in the United States. But if the Almighty God establishes upon earth an arbiter that never could act unjustly, then you would be obliged to say the decision must be just. I have no appeal from it. Now, God says that the Catholic Church can never believe a lie or teach a lie, and the Catholic Church is bound by the decision of the Pope, and there is no appeal from it; and, therefore, she believes she cannot tell a lie. This is the first attribute of the Pope. Now, consider this, my friends, Infallibility; impossibility of teaching a lie; impossibility of making a mistake in the matter of doctrine in the Universal Church. Why! It happens that this brings him so near to the Almighty God, that, before Him, as he stands there—as the head of the Church—all the rest of mankind dwindle into nothing. He stands there and he speaks; he says to the Church, "Hear me, O Church of Jesus Christ! hear me". The Infallible Church bows down before him, and says, "Speak thou for the Church. Thy servant hears". He speaks, and the moment he opens his lips with dogmatic utterance—I no longer see in him a man—I only hear the voice of a man; but I see reflected the infallible light of God, and hear the word of Jesus Christ through his lips—the word of which it is written, "Heaven and earth shall pass away". It is simply awful to consider a man invested with so much of the attributes of God.—*Rev. Thomas Burke, O.P.*

NECESSITY OF AN INFALLIBLE AUTHORITY.

§ Monseigneur de Cheverus, in his many sermons, often dwelt on the necessity of some teaching authority to render unwavering the faith of a learned as well as an ignorant man. To convince Protestants of this necessity, he often repeated in the discourses which he addressed to them these simple words, but words which always produced the desired effect: "Every day, my brethren, I read the Holy Scripture like yourselves. I read it with reflection and prayer, having previously invoked the Holy Spirit; and yet at almost every page I find many things that I cannot understand, and I find the great necessity of some speaking authority, which may point out to me the meaning of the text, and render my faith firm". And his hearers immediately made the application to themselves. "If Monseigneur de Cheverus", said they, "who is more learned than we, cannot comprehend the Sacred Scripture, how comes it that our ministers tell us, that the Bible is to each of us a full and clear rule of faith, easily understood of itself, and requiring no aid in its elucidation? Taking occasion from the admission that even the most learned cannot agree as to matters of faith, Monseigneur de Cheverus pointed out how wisely God came to aid human weakness in the discovery of truth, by appointing a living, speaking authority, which, drawing its origin from Christ and His Apostles, has descended down to us by an uninterrupted succession of Pastors, professing at all times, and in all places, and without the least variation, the same holy doctrine as was professed by the Apostles.

THE SUBMISSION OF THE ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY TO
THE POPE.

¶ Fenelon, Archbishop of Cambray, published in the year 1697 a work entitled, *An Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints*, which some time after its publication was condemned by Pope Innocent XII. The account of the condemnation of the book arrived at Cambray on the 25th of March, 1699, the Feast of the Annunciation, at the very moment that the Archbishop was about ascending the pulpit to preach on the feast of the day. Though affected at the account of a decision so contrary to what he expected, he repined not; but so great was the hold religion had on his soul, that, recollecting himself for a few moments, he abandoned the

subject on which he intended to speak, and in its place introduced the subject of perfect submission to the will of superiors. He spoke so feelingly on the matter that he drew copious tears from his auditory. In the following month, on the 9th of April, he published a mandate to the following effect: "Our Most Holy Father the Pope has condemned the book entitled *An Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints*, by a brief dated the 12th of March, 1699. . . . We, my dear brethren, submit to this brief, sincerely, absolutely, and without a shadow of restriction. . . . It is from our whole heart that we exhort you to an entire submission and to an unreserved docility, that there may be no danger of that unqualified obedience which is due to the Holy See, and of which we intend, with the grace of God, to give you an example to the last moment of our life". Besides, to leave to his diocese a monument of his perfect submission and repentance, he got made for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament a *monstrance* supported by two angels, one of whom was represented trampling under foot a variety of bad books, and on the cover of one was legibly written, *An Explanation of the Maxims of the Saints*.

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. How do you prove the Church is infallible?
2. Why is it that Christ should always remain with His Church?
3. How do you prove from St. Matthew that the Church is infallible?
4. Can you adduce any other texts of Scripture in proof of the infallibility of the Church?
5. Can you prove from tradition and reason that the Church cannot err?
6. In what portion of the Church does infallibility reside?
7. What do you mean by the infallibility of the Pope?
8. Can you prove from St. Matthew that the Pope is infallible?
9. What other argument have you in support of the infallibility of the Pope?

540 QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

10. What do the holy Fathers say as to the infallibility of the Pope?
11. What are the arguments from reason that the Pope is infallible?
12. What are the sentiments of Muzzarelli on the Pope's infallibility?
13. Can the decrees of the Pope be reversed by the decrees of the Bishops?
14. Can we suppose a case of all the Bishops dissenting from the Pope?
15. If the Bishops be divided in their opinions, with whom does infallibility reside?
16. What does Muzzarelli say on the infallibility of the Pope?
17. How do you prove that the decree of the Pope cannot be reversed by the Bishops assembled in Council?
18. Is the opinion that the decree of Bishops in Council can reverse the decree of the Pope, opposed to reason?
19. If some of the Bishops, with the Pope, should dissent from the rest, with whom will infallibility be found?

PRACTICE.

1. Firmly believe whatever the Church proposes, no matter how incomprehensible it may appear, for whatever she teaches must be true, as she is continually under the guidance of the Holy Ghost.
2. Always revere the practices of the Church, and willingly perform what she inculcates; for, being the pillar and ground of truth, she cannot lead you astray.
3. Bow down with submission to the decisions and wishes of the Pope, for he is appointed by Jesus Christ to rule and guide all his children.

PRAYER.

Grant, O God! that we may ever continue obedient and dutiful children of our holy mother, the Church, and that, under all persecutions and trials, we may continue firmly attached to the rock upon which Thou hast built Thy Church. We acknowledge that we are erring children, but under the guidance of our spiritual mother, and faithfully

complying with her commands and wishes, we hope, through Thy great mercy, for pardon of our past offences, and grace never to offend Thee more. Amen.

CHAPTER XLII.

ON THE POPE AND COUNCILS, AND ON THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN.

Q. Is a general Council superior to the Pope?

A. No.

1. The Pope, as we have before said, forms a part of a general Council, even the principal part; for he is its head, and without his confirmation its decrees cannot have the binding force of the decrees of a general Council. To assert, then, that a general Council is superior to the Pope, in the sense that he is bound to obey its decrees, though even he should neither have approved of nor confirmed them, is to advance a proposition contradictory in terms. To assert that a general Council is superior to the Pope, in the sense that all the Bishops assembled in Council, abstracting from the Pope, have a greater authority than the Pope, would be advancing a proposition equally as absurd as the other, as there can be no general Council without the Pope, and it is only by their being united with him that the Bishops assembled form a general Council.

2. Moreover, are the Bishops, when met in Council, superior to the Pope, or are they not? Is the Episcopate spread through the Church the sovereign autho-

rity or not? If the body of the Bishops dispersed over the entire Church be superior to the Pope, what becomes of the supremacy of jurisdiction, or of power, which by divine right belongs to the Pope, and which is an article of Catholic faith? If the Bishops, at the moment they are met in Council, are only just then the superiors of the Pope, and are at that time constituted the true rulers of the Church, it follows that at that precise time they acquire supremacy of jurisdiction, and that the Pope has lost it. But to say that the Pope can ever, for a single instant, be deprived of the supremacy of jurisdiction, is rank heresy. We, then, boldly assert that there is no general Council without the Pope; and in a Council, even a general one, the Pope is always the *culminating point of the Apostolate—the sacred pivot on which entire Christianity turns, as on Christ, the teacher and chief of all.* Even in a general Council the Pope still holds the same office with which he was entrusted by Jesus Christ when He said to Peter, “feed my lambs, feed my sheep”, and “confirm thy brethren in the faith”. The Pope, therefore, maintains his authority over the Bishops assembled in general Council. But would this be the case, if the Bishops had authority to oblige the Pope to obey their decrees; and, what is more, if they had authority to judge and depose him?

Q. If the Pope be infallible, must we not conclude that the Councils are unnecessary, and that the Bishops are not judges of faith?

A. It does not follow that the Councils are unnecessary, and that Bishops are not judges of faith, because the Pope is infallible.

3. Because the Pope is infallible, we cannot thence infer that the Councils are of no use. That which had been practised by the Apostles, according to the

commands they received from their Master, cannot be thought useless. But the Scripture tells us, that after the ascension of Jesus Christ, the Apostles assembled in Council at Jerusalem. A great many writers are of opinion that they also assembled in Council to compose the Apostles' creed. Although the Pope has received from Jesus Christ the promise that his faith should not fail, he is not on that account less bound to employ all suitable means before he sends forth his judgments. But of all means of investigating truth, there is none preferable to a general Council, to which infallibility has been likewise promised. There is no better means of being acquainted with the state of the entire Church—of knowing its evils, and the best remedies to be adopted against those evils, than the union of Pope and Bishops in Council.*

4. Neither can it be said that the Bishops are not judges of faith because the Pope is infallible. For, in the first place, they exercise their office of judges of faith by condemning all errors that arise in their respective dioceses and through the whole extent of their jurisdiction. In the second place, their judgment in Council often anticipates that of the Pope, and as soon as it is confirmed by the Pope it becomes the judgment of the Church, and consequently infallible. Again, even should the Pope anticipate the judgment of Bishops, the latter are still judges of faith, though *they are not judges of the judgment of the Pope*, and only assent to what had been already decided; for one may be a judge without having the power of reversing a judgment already passed.

5. The bishops assembled at Ephesus in 431 were judges of faith, and yet the sentence which they passed against Nestorius was merely the execution of Pope Celestine's letter, who had charged St. Cyril of Alexandria with the condemnation of that her-

siarch. The Bishops assembled at Chalcedon were, too, judges of faith, and yet they only confirmed the sentence already passed by St. Leo against the heresy of Eutyches. Again, in the first Council of Jerusalem, the Apostles were judges of faith, and yet they only gave their assent to what St. Peter had said : " Now, therefore, why tempt you God to put a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear ? " They gave their opinion on the question, although the subject had been decided at the moment that their Head, inspired by the Holy Ghost, had spoken, and when it was no longer permitted, says St. Jerome, to have an opinion different from him. The judgment of the Apostles and that of St. Peter were one and the same judgment ; and it could not be otherwise, for the same God who had promised that the faith of Peter should not fail, also promised that the Council should be assisted by Him. The Holy Spirit who had enlightened Peter, also shed His light on the Council, and so one and the same judgment must be the result.

Q. What do you mean by a Council ?

A. A Council is the assembly of the chief Pastors of the Church, for the purpose of deciding questions regarding faith, morals, and discipline.

6. There are three sorts of Councils, provincial Councils, national Councils, and general or cœcumical Councils. A provincial Council is an assembly of Bishops, to which are invited all the Bishops of a province. A national Council is the assembly of the Bishops of a nation or country, under the presidency of a Metropolitan or a Papal delegate. A general or cœcumical Council is an assembly of Bishops called together by the Pope, to which all the Bishops in the world are summoned, and which is presided over by

the Pope or his legate, or at least confirmed or approved by the Pope. That a Council should be general, it is not necessary that all the Bishops of the world should be present at it, but only a sufficiently large number, so that the universal Church may be represented by them.

Q. How many general Councils have been held up to this time?

A. Nineteen, together with the first Council held in Jerusalem by the Apostles.

7. The first general Council was held in Nice in 325, in which the consubstantiality of the Word and the divinity of Jesus Christ was defined against the Arians. The second was held in Constantinople in 381, which confirmed the faith of Nice, professed the divinity of the Holy Ghost, and condemned the Apollinarists, who pretended that Jesus Christ did not take flesh like ours, nor a rational soul like the soul of man. The third was held at Ephesus in 431, and at that Council it was defined that the Blessed Virgin was the Mother of God. The fourth Council was that of Chalcedon, in 451, in which the *anathema* hurled against Nestorius at Ephesus was confirmed, and the doctrine of Eutyches, that in Jesus Christ there was only one nature, was condemned. The fifth, held in Constantinople in 553, condemned the *three chapters* or three essays favouring the doctrine of Nestorius. The sixth, also held in Constantinople, in the year 680, condemned the error of the Monotholites, who admitted but one will in Jesus Christ. The seventh, held in Nice in 787, against the Iconoclasts or image breakers. The eighth, held in Constantinople in 869, in which Photius, who had usurped that see, was condemned. The ninth, which was held in the Lateran basilica of Rome, passed many laws regulating discipline.*

8. The tenth, also held in the Lateran basilica in the year 1139, endeavoured to effect an union between the Greek and Latin Churches. The eleventh, assembled too in St. John Lateran in the year 1179, reformed many abuses of discipline which crept into the Church. The twelfth, also held in the Lateran basilica, in the year 1215, passed many laws regarding faith, morals, and discipline. The twenty-first canon of that council, *Omnis utriusque sexus*, ordains that all the faithful should confess their sins, at least once a year, to their own priest, and receive at his hands the Holy Eucharist, at least at Easter time. The thirteenth was held at Lyons in the year 1245; and in that Council Pope Innocent IV. pronounced sentence of excommunication against the Emperor Frederick. The fourteenth, also assembled at Lyons in the year 1274, again endeavoured to effect a reunion of the Greeks and Latins.

9. The fifteenth was held in 1311, at Vienne in Dauphine, for the purpose of suppressing the order of Knights Templars. In that Council were also condemned a fanatical set of men and women, commonly called Beguards and Beguines, who, under an imposing exterior, abandoned themselves to the most shameful disorders that depraved nature can suggest. The Council of Constance was held in 1414, for the extinction of the great schism of the West. A great many theologians are in doubt as to the œcumenicity of this Council as to all its sessions. It is, however, certain that all its decrees have not been confirmed by the Holy See. The sixteenth is the Council of Florence, held in 1439. In that Council the Greeks signed, in union with the Latins, their profession of faith regarding the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Son, equally as from the Father. The seventeenth Council, and fifth of Lateran, was summoned in 1512, by Julius II., for the extinc-

tion of heresies and the uprooting of schism. The eighteenth general Council was held at Trent, in order principally to condemn the heresies of Luther and Calvin. In that Council there were present six Cardinals, three Patriarchs, thirty-two Archbishops, and two hundred and twenty-eight Bishops, Abbots, and Generals of religious orders. It was opened in 1545, and did not close until 1563. The nineteenth and last general Council, called the Vatican Council, was summoned by Pope Pius IX., and was held in the Vatican Basilica, at Rome, in the years 1869 and 1870, at which there were present, in the third public session, 667 prelates. In the fourth public session, held on the 18th July, 1870, the doctrine of Papal Infallibility was promulgated and defined as an "article of faith", by 533 votes, and that of the Pope. About 300 Bishops, who from various reasons were unable to attend the Council, forwarded, in writing, their adhesion to the decree; thus making the positive adherents to the dogma number 830, or about five-sixths of the entire Episcopacy.

Q. Have the decrees of Councils the force of law before they are approved by the Pope?

A. No; they must be first confirmed by the Pope.

10. As the decrees of General Councils, as we have already seen, cannot have the force of law until they receive the confirmation of the Pope, so neither can the acts of a National or Provincial Council be considered obligatory until they are confirmed by the Pope. The decrees passed by the Fathers of a Provincial Council are forwarded to Rome, that they may be subjected to the judgment and correction of the Holy See, and, if approved, may receive the Pope's confirmation. It is a point of discipline—now a general law—that the acts of a Provincial Council cannot be published, nor have any force,

until they meet with the approval of the Holy See. This practice has been for a long time observed through the entire Church. In the year 1584 a Council was held at Bourges, over which Renaud de Beaune presided. The decrees of the Council were immediately forwarded to Rome, and having received there some corrections, were returned approved, with a *brief*, in which Sixtus V. said : " You will take care to publish the decrees with the corrections that have been made, and not otherwise". By a *brief*, dated the 22nd of August, 1851, Pius IX. condemned this proposition of Nuitz : " A definition emanating from a National Council is not subject to emendation". Therefore, a definition emanating from a Provincial Council can be amended with greater reason.†

Q. What do you understand by the "Fathers of the Church"?

A. By the Fathers of the Church are meant Greek and Latin Christian writers, who, during the early ages of the Church, wrote on religious subjects.

11. "The Fathers of the Church" are also called "Doctors of the Church", yet there is some difference between a Father and a Doctor of the Church. All "the Fathers of the Church" are enumerated among "the Doctors" of the Church, but all "the Doctors" are not "Fathers". The name "Fathers of the Church" is particularly applied to the holy and learned of the first twelve centuries—that is, the predecessors of those who are designated Doctors or Theologians. Hence, St. Bernard, who lived in the twelfth century, is considered as the last of "the Fathers of the Church", and St. Thomas of Aquin, who lived in the thirteenth century, has only the simple title of Doctor. All the Doctors of the Church, even before St. Bernard's time, that is,

during the first twelve centuries, are not considered "Fathers of the Church". They are not all enumerated among "the Holy Fathers", for they were not all considered holy. Tertullian, for example, holds a distinguished rank among the Doctors of the Church, but by his doctrine and his obstinacy in error, he has been excluded from the rank of "Holy Father". The Church gives the title of "Father" only to those who, brought up in its sacred ministry, have, by means of that sacred ministry, brought forth children to Jesus Christ; but all the learned members of the Church have not been invested with the powers of the Priesthood. St. Prosper merited, by his learning and his writings, the title of "Doctor" of the Church, but as he was a mere layman he cannot be styled a "Father". Among "the Doctors of the Church", who are, too, named "Holy Fathers", there are four distinguished in the Latin Church, and four in the Greek Church. The four distinguished names in the Latin Church are—St. Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan; St. Jerome, Priest; St. Augustin, Bishop of Hippo; and St. Gregory the Great, Pope. The four distinguished names in the Greek Church are—St. Athanasius, Archbishop of Alexandria; St. Basil, Bishop of Cæsarea, in Cappadocia; St. Gregory of Nazianzen; and St. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople.

Q. What other advantages have we in the Church?

A. We have the true faith, the communion of Saints, and the forgiveness of sins (*Apostles' Creed*).

12. Of the many "advantages" that we have from being members of the "true Church", the greatest is the possession of "the true Faith", as

550 THE ADVANTAGE OF THE TRUE FAITH.

without true Faith, according to St. Paul, it is impossible to please God. Though we should show forth in our lives the most heroic virtues, though we should be models of charity, goodness, piety, benevolence, purity, and patience, but yet have not Faith, all our virtues and good qualities would be of no avail towards our eternal salvation. Being members of "the true Church", we possess the great treasure of Faith, and in her alone is it to be found. She, and she alone, professes and teaches true doctrine, for Jesus Christ has promised to be always with her, guiding and instructing her, and ever preserving her from error.

13. As, then, Jesus is always with His Church, He will never permit her to teach false doctrine, but will continue to preserve unchanged and uncorrupted to the end of time the sacred truths which He revealed to her, and in the beginning put into her mouth. The doctrine which the Church teaches is, therefore, infallibly true, and the Faith which she professes is truth itself, for God is truth, and cannot deny Himself by speaking contrary to the truth. How great is the happiness that we enjoy, dear children, in being born and brought up in the true Church ! In her bosom we can rest with security ; we need apprehend no danger from her teaching ; "the true Faith" she will for ever uphold, for God has declared that against her the gates of hell will never prevail.

14. "In the true Church" we have also "the communion of saints"; that is, the union which exists between all the members of the Church, by which they communicate to each other the spiritual goods which belong to them, such as their mutual participation in prayer, good works, graces, and sacraments. The members of Christ's mystical body, whether they be in the Church triumphant in

heaven, in the Church suffering in purgatory, or in the Church militant upon earth, are all but one body, and so all partake of the same blessings, in so far as their respective estates or conditions permit. The saints in heaven hold communion with the faithful on earth, by assisting us with their prayers and intercession with God. Our communion is kept up with the souls in purgatory, by the good works and prayers which we offer to God for them, and in particular by the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. As there is a natural union between the members of a human body, so there exists a spiritual union between the true faithful here on earth, who are fellow-members of the same mystical body, and united in one and the same faith. They mutually assist each other by the prayers, fasts, alms-deeds, and other good works which they perform. They have a share in, and partake of all the sacrifices, sacraments, and indulgences of the Church, if they be in the happy state of grace. But on this subject we shall speak more in detail in a subsequent chapter. In the true Church we have also the great advantage of "the forgiveness of sins".‡

Q. What means the forgiveness of sins ?

A. That Christ left to the Pastors of His Church the power of *forgiving sins* (*John, xx. 23*).

15. Our Lord Jesus Christ has left to His Church "the power of forgiving sins" to such as properly apply for forgiveness, and that power has been always exercised by "the Pastors of His Church", who are its Bishops and Priests. This power had been given at first by Jesus Christ to His Apostles, when He said to them: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall

loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (*St. Matthew*, xviii. 18). And after His resurrection He gave them this same power, when, breathing upon them, He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained" (*John*, xx. 21, 22). From these words of our Lord it follows that the power of forgiving and retaining sins had been given by Him to His Apostles and their successors. This power, given originally to the Apostles, was by them transmitted to the Bishops—their immediate successors—and they, in turn, transmitted it to Pastors who came after them; and so on, from age to age, the same power has been transmitted to the Bishops and Priests of our own days, and will continue in the Church to the very end of the world. It is Jesus Christ Himself who declares this consoling truth in His Gospel. It is one of the most interesting articles of our faith, and one that we should firmly believe when we say, I believe in "the forgiveness of sins".

16. It is, indeed, true, that God alone can forgive sins in His own name and by His own power; but as He has the power of forgiving sins in His own name, He can communicate that power to others as His ministers, as in fact He has done so to His Apostles and their successors when He addressed to them, before and after His resurrection, the words which we have quoted above. On the foregoing passages from Scripture, St. Chrysostom, one of the greatest lights of the Christian world, and who lived in the fifth century, writes thus: "To the Priests is given a power which God would give neither to the Angels nor the Archangels; for to these it was not said: 'whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed also in heaven'. Earthly

princes have, indeed, the power of binding, but it is only as to the body ; but the binding power of the Priests reaches even to the soul, and ascends to the heavens, insomuch that what the Priests do below, God ratifies above, and the Master confirms the sentence of the servants" (*On the Priesthood*). The same is the language of the Holy Fathers in all ages, which is confirmed by the constant and uninterrupted belief and practice of the Christian world.

17. The means by which this power is exercised, and forgiveness applied to our souls, are : 1. The Sacrament of Baptism, which remits original sin, and also all actual sins committed before the reception of this sacrament, and that so effectually, that adults who receive it with the requisite dispositions are forgiven not only the sins committed, but also all temporal punishment due to them. 2. Penance, by which all sins are remitted, no matter how grievous, which are committed after Baptism. The exercise of this power has, as we have already seen, been entrusted to the Bishops and Priests of the Church. The Bishops and Priests are the depositaries of that supreme power ; but it is a judicial power, which they cannot exercise indiscriminately, but must first consider the merits of the case, and the dispositions of those who apply for the remission of their sins. Christ, in saying to the Apostles : " Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained : and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven", constituted them judges of our souls in regard to our sins ; so that they are to take full cognizance of the cause before they pronounce sentence, that they may act with justice and prudence, forgiving and not forgiving, *loosing* and not *loosing* the bonds of sin, according to the disposition of sinners.

18. So great is the necessity of exercising this

power with discretion, that the words of absolution pronounced over a sinner not duly disposed produce no effect; for though the Priest says, "I absolve thee", God does not ratify the sentence of absolution in heaven, but rather pronounces condemnation on the false penitent. You then see, dear children, that the power conferred on the Pastors of the Church is not an arbitrary power, not a power that they can exercise as custom, caprice, passion, or ignorance may suggest. Pastors, according to St. Paul, are "the dispensers of the mysteries of God"; they are the stewards of the riches of His mercy, and the trust committed to them they are bound to fulfil without either too much indulgence or too much severity. In a subsequent chapter—that on Penance—we shall enter more fully on this subject.

The first part of the Christian doctrine has now, dear children, been explained to you, and so we shall pass to the second part, which treats of morality, or that which we are obliged to do in order to gain heaven. Morality means a rule of morals; that is, the many and various duties which we have to perform towards God, towards our neighbour, and towards ourselves.

HISTORICAL ILLUSTRATIONS.

A DESCRIPTION OF THE FIRST GENERAL COUNCIL OF NICE.

* Nice, the principal city of Bithynia, was appointed as the place of the first general Council. Thither were the Bishops invited to repair from the different provinces of the empire. The Emperor Constantine the Great furnished them with money and conveniences for their journey. Three hundred and eighteen Bishops, besides Priests and Deacons, arrived at Nice for the day appointed. Many of them bore on their maimed bodies the glorious marks of the conflicts

they had sustained in defence of their faith during the late persecutions. On the 19th day of June, 325, they assembled in a spacious hall, well adapted for the purpose. The Pope, St. Sylvester, not being able to assist in person on account of his great age, the celebrated Osius, with two deputed Priests, Vitus and Vincent, presided in his name. The assembled Bishops, each one sitting according to his rank, remained in profound silence till the Emperor made his appearance, when all rose up. Constantine, magnificently attired in his imperial robes of state, unarmed, and without his guards, entered the hall with no other attendants than the Christian officers of his household. The manly comeliness of his person, and the awful majesty of his look, tempered with an air of unaffected modesty, drew respect from the whole assembly, who considered him as the guardian messenger of peace. He advanced through the middle of the upper end of the hall, where he remained standing before a lowly seat prepared for him, till a sign was made for all the Bishops to take their seats. After a short pause, Eustathius, the venerable Bishop of Antioch, rose, and in a few words explained to the Fathers the subject of dispute which had been agitated in the Church of Alexandria, and was now submitted to them for final decision. Eustathius, having thus briefly stated the nature of the controversy, sat down again; a deep silence ensued, and every eye was turned on Constantine. He met their looks of expectation with a smiling countenance; then pausing for some minutes seemingly to recollect himself, he placidly addressed them in Latin, which was the language of the Empire. He warmly recommended to them unanimity and despatch in their discussions, assuring them that he there sat as a hearer only, not as a judge of controversy; that he should attend their deliberations, not to control but to support the freedom of debate, not to dictate, but to receive their decisions, which he should revere as the oracles of heaven, and maintain with his whole authority. When, at the end of five weeks, the celebrated Council closed, Constantine, happy at so important an event, gave a public entertainment to the Bishops before they separated, made them handsome presents, and dismissed them with honour to their respective homes.—*History of the Council of Nice.*

FATHER MANTONE ON THE INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

† A few years ago, M. L'Abbe Gaumé, Vicar-general of Nevers, travelled into Italy, and when at Rome paid a visit

to Father Mantone, superior of the house belonging to the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer. This venerable old man had received the religious habit from the hands of Alphonsus Liguori, with whom he lived four years. After speaking for some time regarding the private life of the holy Bishop, they entered into a conversation about his *moral theology*, and the opposition with which it had been met. Father Mantone then entered into an account of the Saint's canonization and final triumph. "Peter has spoken", said he; "*the cause is ended*". "Not everywhere", replied the Abbé. "Ah! yes", said the good Father, in an animated tone; "I know that there are still some bad Frenchmen who are opposed to his principles, but they are more foolish than wicked". And then he, in a strain of good humour, entered into a long detail of the consequences of Gallicanism and rigorism. "The *moral theology* of St. Liguori is very dangerous", was the answer given him. "I will", replied the good Father, "just show what this pretension of you French amounts to. I, the undersigned superior, professor, director of a seminary, parish priest, French vicar, knowing *de jure* better than the Pope, if a *theologian* be good or bad; knowing, too, *de facto* better than he, the morality that is best suited to France, pronounce dangerous the *theology* of St. Liguori, even approved of by the Pope; and though good for Italy, for Germany, for Spain, and the rest of the world, I declare it injurious to France. And, so convinced, I hereby declare that my conscience will not allow me to follow or to teach the aforesaid *theology*, and that Rome would be better employed in placing Liguori on the *Index* than in inscribing him in the catalogue of the saints". And saying this, he riveted his eyes on M. L'Abbé Gaumé, as if he were searching his very heart. "It is, at all events, true", said the Abbé, "that it is a contraband *theology*, which was stealthily introduced into the seminaries, to the great dissatisfaction of the professors and Bishops". "Contraband *theology*! My dear sir, is or is not the Holy Father the head of the universal Church? Does his spiritual kingdom, his right of ruling and teaching extend or extend not over all kingdoms, even over the *blessed Gallican Church?*" The good Father innocently thought that he was disputing with a rigid Gallican, whereas in reality his opponent was a true *ultramontane*—that is, a stickler for the doctrines of the Holy See.—*Les trois Rome*, by M. L'Abbé Gaumé.

**ST. ANTHONY'S FIRE—AN INSTANCE OF THE INTERCESSION
OF THE SAINTS.**

† As a very remarkable instance of the great interest which the saints in heaven take in us, and of their great influence with God, we shall insert the following striking occurrence:—In the year 1009, a contagious disease, known as the *sacred fire*, ravaged a great many provinces of France. Some pilgrims having come to Arles, to pray before the holy relics of St. Anthony, had no sooner implored his intercession than they were cured. The report of this miraculous cure soon attracted to the church in which St. Anthony's relics were placed, a great concourse of people. All France implored the protection of the illustrious servant of God against this cruel scourge, and the event justified their confidence. The name of *St. Anthony's fire*, ever since given to that disease, remains a popular monument of the assistance granted to France by that great Saint, and of the great efficacy of his prayers.—*Life of St. Anthony.*

QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

1. Is it absurd to suppose that a General Council can be superior to the Pope?
2. Can the Pope's supremacy be reconciled with his inferiority to a General Council?
3. If the Pope be infallible, of what use are Councils?
4. If the Pope be infallible, how can Bishops be judges of Faith?
5. Give some examples of the Bishops being judges of Faith.
6. How many sorts of Councils are there?
7. How many General Councils have been held?
8. Where were the tenth and subsequent Councils held?
9. In what Council were the Knights Templars condemned?
10. Must the decrees of Councils receive the approval of the Pope?
11. What is meant by the word Holy Fathers?
12. What is the greatest advantage we have in the true Church?
13. Can the Church teach false doctrine?

558 QUESTIONS FOR EXAMINATION.

14. What do you mean by the communion of saints ?
15. How do you prove that the Pastors of the Church can forgive sins ?
16. What does St. Chrysostom say of the power of the Priests ?
17. By what means is forgiveness of sins applied to our souls ?
18. Is the power of forgiving sins an arbitrary power ?

PRACTICE.

1. Never cease thanking God for the great blessing bestowed upon you in being brought up in the true faith.
2. As the angels in heaven can assist you, and as they have such power with God, frequently implore their intercession.
3. As the Church has received from Jesus Christ the power of remitting every sin, however grievous, have immediate recourse to one of her ministers when you have fallen into mortal sin.

PRAYER.

O sweet Jesus ! we thank thee for the great gift of faith bestowed upon us, and we resolve, on this day, so to order our lives that we may be always pleasing in Thy eyes. Ever preserve us from sin, dear Lord ! but if we shall have, at any time, the misfortune of offending Thy adorable Goodness by consenting to sin, we shall have recourse at once to the Tribunal of Penance, and with sorrow of heart sincerely confess our transgressions to Thy minister, to whom Thou hast given the power of forgiving sins. O mother of God ! pray to thy divine Son, that we may always continue faithful servants of God and true children of the Church.—Amen.

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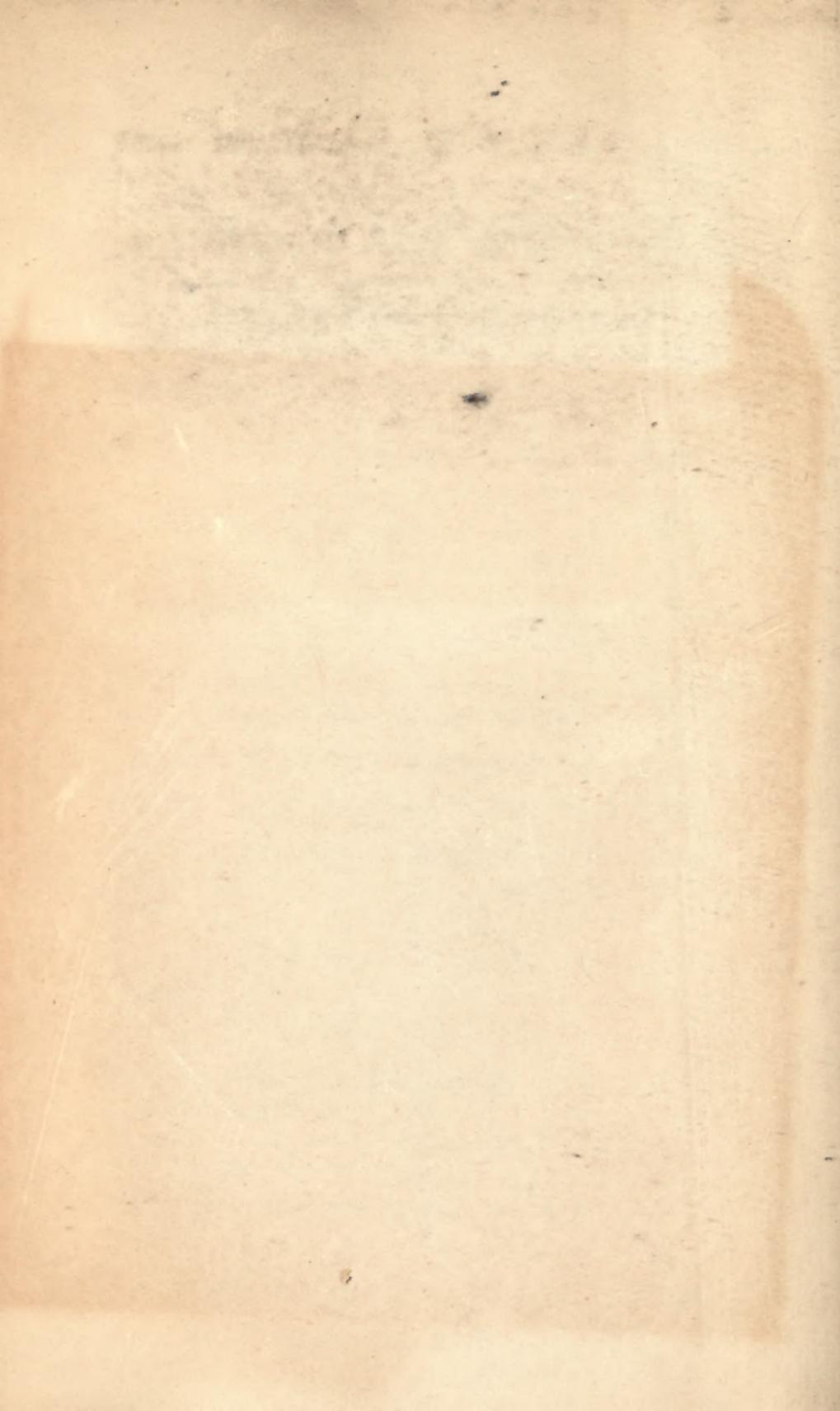
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